

Yoga for All

A Practical Handbook of Yoga



Foreword by

SRI M

BHARAT YOGAVIDYA KENDRA

For BYK TTC alumni - Guru Seva Week 2026. Not for redistribution.



*“ Is there some way by which the ordinary mind,
caught up in this world with its pains and pleasures,
can be free and touch the Essence?*

*The study of this is called the Brahmauidya,
and the way to do this is called Yoga.”*

Sri M

YOGA FOR ALL

A Practical Handbook of Yoga



Bharat Yogavidya Kendra

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*Dedicated to our Guru,
Sri Guru Babaji*



Bowing down to all the gurus of the Nath Yoga Sampradaya

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*A practical handbook of Yoga compiled by
Bharat Yogavidya Kendra, is as the title
suggests a great practical handbook for anyone
who wants to learn the practice of Yoga.*

*Well edited and containing the essentials for the
beginner, I recommend it to one and all.
May it reach as many people as possible.*

- Sri M

*Founder, BYK
Graham, Texas
October 28, 2024*



PROLOGUE

Welcome to *Yoga for All*—a practical yoga guide crafted by Bharat Yogavidya Kendra to support your yoga practice and enhance your holistic well-being. This booklet is your step-by-step companion, focusing on the eight limbs of yoga as proposed by Sage Patanjali. Here, you will find comprehensive instructions on asanas, pranayama, mudras, and more.

Tailored for practitioners of all levels, the book provides clear, concise directions to ensure your practice is both effective and safe. From the energizing practice of *Surya Namaskara* to the calming practice of *Yoga Nidra*, every element is curated to support your journey toward holistic health.

This handbook not only helps you learn yogic techniques but also encourages you to embrace a lifestyle that nurtures your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being through Yoga.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the creation of this handbook. Your tireless effort, expertise, and passion have been instrumental in bringing this book to life. We honor all our gurus for their invaluable guidance and wisdom, which have illuminated our path. We express our profound appreciation and love to Sri M, whose teachings and journey inspire us to explore the depths of yoga and spirituality. Your wisdom, support and love is our guiding light.

Welcome to *Yoga for All*.

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Chapter 1

General Guidelines to Follow

To ensure a safe, effective, and fulfilling practice, follow these general guidelines:

1. Create a Conducive Environment:

Choose a quiet, clean, and comfortable space for practice. A well-ventilated room or serene outdoor setting can enhance the experience. Keep the area free from distractions to help maintain focus.

2. Best Time to Practice: The ideal time for yoga is during the Brahma Muhurta (approximately 1.5 hours before sunrise) or early morning. If this isn't feasible, choose a consistent time that suits your schedule, ensuring a minimum two-hour gap after meals.

3. Clothing and Equipment: Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing for unrestricted movement. Use a yoga mat or a clean, flat surface, and consider props like blocks, straps, or cushions, which can aid asana practice, especially for beginners.

4. Warm-Up: Begin your practice with a gentle warm-up or Sukshma Vyayama to

prepare the body, increase circulation, and reduce the risk of injury.

5. Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to your body's signals. Practice mindfulness, and avoid pushing beyond your limits. Yoga is not about competition or comparison; it's about self-improvement and finding inner peace.

6. Consistency Is Key: Regular practice brings the best results. Aim for a daily routine, but be flexible and kind to yourself on days when a full practice isn't possible.

7. Breathing: Proper breathing is fundamental in yoga. Focus on your breath, especially during asanas and pranayama, to deepen your practice and enhance its benefits. Generally, avoid holding the breath unless instructed otherwise.

8. Hydration: Stay hydrated before and after your practice, but avoid drinking large amounts of water during practice to prevent discomfort.

9. Post-Practice Care: Conclude your practice with Shavasana (Corpse Pose) to relax the body and integrate the practice's benefits. Allow yourself a few minutes of rest before transitioning back to your daily activities.

10. Personal Journey: Remember, yoga is a personal journey toward self-discovery and well-being. Honor your unique path and progress at your own pace.

By adhering to these guidelines, you set the foundation for a practice that not only strengthens the body but also calms the mind and nourishes the soul.

Tips to Avoid Injuries

Progress Gradually: Increase the intensity and duration of your practice slowly over time to allow your body to adapt without strain.

Educate Yourself: Learning about the anatomy and physiology related to yoga can help you understand how to practice safely and effectively.

Attend Professional Classes: Whenever

possible, practice under the guidance of a certified yoga instructor who can provide personal feedback and adjustments.

Mind the Transition: Pay attention to transitions between poses as much as the poses themselves. Many injuries occur not in the pose but in the movement from one pose to another.

Avoid Competition: Remember that yoga is a personal practice. Avoid comparing yourself with others, especially in a class setting, to prevent pushing beyond your limits.

When to Seek Medical Help

If you experience sudden, sharp pain in the joints during or after your practice, it may indicate an injury requiring medical attention.

Any recurring discomfort in the same area after practicing yoga should be evaluated, especially if it does not improve with rest. Experiencing numbness, tingling, or loss of sensation during or after yoga could signal nerve compression or other issues that necessitate a medical consultation.



Chapter 2

Prayers and Mantra

Sangachadwam Mantra

(Veda: Rig Veda)

ॐ संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं
सं वो मनांसि जानताम्।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे
सञ्जानाना उपासते॥

Om Samgacchadwam Samvadadwam
Sam Vo Manamsi Janatam
Deva Bhagam Yatha Purve
Sanjanana Upasate॥

Om, May we move in harmony,
speak in one voice,
let our minds be in agreement,
just as the ancient Gods shared their
portion of the sacrifice.

Patanjali's Prayer

This prayer is attributed to Sage Patanjali,
revered for compiling the Yoga Sutras. It
honors the efforts to cleanse the mind
and pave the way for spiritual growth.

योगेन चित्तस्य पदेन वचनं।
मलं शरीरस्य च वैद्यकेन॥

योऽपाकरोत्तमं प्रवरं मुनिनां।
पतञ्जलिं प्राञ्जलिरानतोऽस्मि॥

Yogena Cittasya, Padena Vācām, Malaṃ
Śarīrasya Ca Vaidyakena | Yo'pākarottam
Pravarāṃ Muninām Patañjaliṃ
Prāñjalirānato'smi ||

I bow with folded hands to the Supreme
Sage Patanjali, who eradicated the
impurity of mind with Yogashastra, the
impurity of speech with Vyakarana
Mahabhashya, and the impurity of the
body with Ayurveda literature.

Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra

ॐ त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे
सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।
उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्
मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात्॥

Om Tryambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim
Pushtivardhanam | Urvaarukamiva
Bandhanaan Mrityormuksheeya
Maamritaat ||

We worship the three-eyed one who is fragrant, and who sustains all living beings. May he liberate us from (Samsara) death. May he (Lord Shiva) lead us to immortality, just as the cucumber falls, once it is ripe, and is released from its bondage.

Guru Mantra

ॐ श्रीगुरुभ्योनमः
Om Hreem Shri Gurubhyo Namah ||

Guru Stuti

अखण्डमण्डलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरम्।
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

Akhaṇḍamaṇḍalākāraṃ vyāptaṃ yēna
charācharam|
Tatpadaṃ darśitaṃ yēna tasmai
śrīguravē namaḥ||

I bow to the revered Guru who reveals the infinite, all-pervading essence that permeates all living and non-living beings.

अज्ञानतिमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जनशलाकया।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

Ajñānatimīrāndhasya
jñānāñjanaśalākayā |
Chakṣurunmilitaṃ yēna tasmai śrīguravē
namaḥ ||

I bow to the revered Guru who, with the ointment of knowledge, opens the inner eye of one blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।
गुरुः साक्षात्परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

GururBrahma GururVishnu GururDevo
Maheshwaraha |
Guru Saakshaat ParaBrahma Tasmai Sri
Gurave Namaha ||

Guru is Brahma. Guru is Vishnu. Guru is God Mahesvara. Guru alone is verily the Supreme Brahman. Therefore prostrations to him (the Guru)

ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
द्वन्द्वतीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम्।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्विरुतं नमामि ॥

Brahmānandaṃ Paramasukhadaṃ
Kevalaṃ jñānamūrṭiṃ
Dvandvātitaṃ Gaganasadṛiṣhaṃ
Tattvamaśyādīlakṣhyam |

Ekam nityam Vimalamachalam
Sarvadhī sākshibhūtam
Bhāvātitaṃ Trigunarahitam Sadgurum
tam namāmi ||

I bow to the true Guru, embodiment of
pure knowledge and bliss, beyond
duality, ever-stable and pure, the witness
of all, and beyond all states and qualities.

ध्यानमूलं गुरुमूर्तिः
पूजामूलं गुरुर्पदम् ।
मन्त्रमूलं गुरुर्वक्त्रं
मोक्षमूलं गुरुर्कृपा ॥

Dhyaana mulam guror murtih Pujaa
mulam guroh padam |
Mantra mulam guror vaakyam Moksha
mulam guroh kripa ||

The Guru's form is the root of meditation,
the Guru's feet the essence of worship,
the Guru's words the source of mantra,
and the Guru's grace the path to
liberation.

DID YOU KNOW?

*The Ajna Chakra, also known as the Guru Chakra
symbolizes intuition; and governs perception and
insight, it enables spiritual communication and inner
guidance when balanced. Chanting Guru Mantra is
beneficial to invoke this guidance.*

Shanti Mantra

1. Om Sahana Vavatu

(Veda: Krishna Yajur Veda; Upanishad:
Taittiriya Upanishad)

This mantra is a Sanskrit shloka from the
Taittiriya Upanishad, typically chanted at
the beginning of a class or session to foster
cooperation, unity, and mutual respect
between the teacher and the students.

ॐ सह नाववतु ।
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं कर्वावहे ।
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विदविशावै ।
ॐ शांतिः शांतिः शांतिः ॥

Om Saha Naavavatu
Saha Nau Bhunaktu Saha
Viiryam Karavaavahai Tejasvi
Naav Adhiitamastu Maa Vidvishaavahai
Om Shaanti Shaanti Shaanti ||

May the Guru and disciple be protected
together, may they enjoy the journey
together, may they work with vigor, may
their study be illuminating, and may they
not misunderstand each other. Peace,
peace, peace.

2. Om Asatoma

(Veda: Shukla Yajur Veda; Upanishad:
Brihadaranyaka Upanishad)

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय ।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Asatoma Sadgamaya
Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya |
Mrityorma Amrutamgamaya
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti ||

Lead me from the unreal to the real, from
darkness to light, and from death to
immortality. Peace, peace, peace.

3. Om Purnamadah

(Veda: Shukla Yajur Veda; Upanishad:
Ishavasya Upanishad)

This mantra is a profound declaration of
the universe's wholeness and infinity.
Traditionally, this mantra is recited
towards the end of a practice,
symbolizing the completion and unity of
the cosmic and individual self.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Purnamadah Purnamidam
Purnaata-Purnamudacyate
Purnasya Purnamaadaaya
Purnamevavashishyate
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti ||

Om, That is complete, This is complete,
From the completeness comes the
completeness. If completeness is taken
away from completeness, only
completeness remains.
Om, peace (in me), peace (in nature),
peace (in divine forces)

Gayatri Mantra

(Veda: Rig Veda)

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः
तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं
भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि
धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

Om Bhur Bhuvaha Suvaha
Tatsavitur Varennyam |
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayath ||

We meditate on that most adored
Supreme Lord, the Creator, whose
effulgence (divine light) illumines all
realms . May this divine light illuminate
our intellect.

Surya Namaskara Mantras

	Asana	Mantra	Meaning
1	Pranamasana	Om Mitraya Namaha	Salutations to the Friend of all
2	Hasta Uttanasana	Om Ravaye Namaha	Salutations to the Shining One
3	Pada Hastasana	Om Suryaya Namaha	Salutations to the One who eliminates darkness and brings light
4	Ashwa Sanchalanasana	Om Bhanave Namaha	Salutations to the One who is filled with brilliance and luster
5	Parvatasana	Om Khagaya Namaha	Salutations to the One who traverses the entire sky and is all-pervading
6	Ashtanga Namaskara	Om Pushne Namaha	Salutations to the One who provides nourishment and fulfills desires
7	Bhujangasana	Om Hiranya Garbhaya Namaha	Salutations to the golden cosmic Self
8	Parvatasana	Om Marichaye Namaha	Salutations to the Lord of the Dawn
9	Ashwa Sanchalanasana	Om Adityaya Namaha	Salutations to the son of Aditi, God of Gods
10	Pada Hastasana	Om Savitre Namaha	Salutations to the Lord of Creation
11	Hasta Uttanasana	Om Arkaya Namaha	Salutations to the One who is worthy of all glory
12	Pranamasana	Om Bhaskaraya Namaha	Salutations to the One who leads to enlightenment



Chapter 3

Sukshma Vyayama

Sukshma Vyayama are gentle movements designed to warm up the body, increase blood circulation, and prepare the joints and muscles for a deeper yoga practice.

Benefits and Importance

Sukshma Vyayama rejuvenates the whole body internally. The key benefits:

- Improves flexibility in muscles and also strengthens them
- Increases ligaments flexibility
- Develops coordination
- Increases lungs capacity
- Increases endurance
- Prepares body for practicing asanas and pranayamas

Joint-Specific Exercises

- Neck
- Shoulders
- Wrists and Hands
- Elbows
- Spinal (Upper, Middle, Lower Back)
- Hips
- Knees
- Ankles and Feet

GRIVA SHAKTI VIKASAKA -1

Neck movement - Up and Down

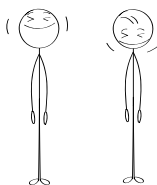


Fig3.1

Practice Steps:

- Stand or sit comfortably on your mat with your head, neck, and spine aligned straight.
- As you inhale, very slowly take your neck to the back, as much as you can, comfortably. Do not strain.
- As you exhale, bring it to the front so the chin touches the collarbone, if possible.
- Repeat few rounds and relax.

Benefits: Releases tension and stiffness in the head, neck, and shoulder region, in particular muscles on the back of the neck.

Contraindications: Should be performed

with care by those with vertigo, advanced age, or cervical spine or other neck-related injuries. If any contraindications are present, perform the movement slowly and avoid holding the posture. Patients with severe cervical spondylosis should avoid bending the neck forward.

GRIVASHAKTI VIKASAKA-2

Neck movement - Turn Left and Right

Practice Steps:

- Continuing in the same seated or standing position.
- Exhale when you turn the neck towards the right and inhale when you bring the neck back to centre.
- Repeat the same on the left.
- Keep the chin parallel to the floor.
- Repeat a few rounds and relax.



Fig 3.2

Benefits: Releases tension and stiffness in the head, neck, and shoulder region, in particular muscles on the side of the neck.

Contraindications: Same as previous

GRIVASHAKTI VIKASAKA-3

Neck movement - Tilt Left and Right

Practice Steps:

- Inhale in the center position and exhale tilting your neck to the right so the right ear is moving towards the right shoulder.
- Do not lift your shoulder.
- Tilt as much as you can comfortably.
- Inhale back to the center position and exhale to the left side.
- Repeat a few rounds and relax.

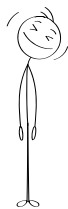


Fig 3.3

Benefits: Same as previous

Contraindications: Same as previous

GRIVASHAKTI VIKASAKA-4

Half Neck Rotation

Practice Steps:

- Forward neck rotation:
 - First, exhale and bend the head forward towards your collar bone.
 - Rotate your neck gently side to side to each shoulder.
 - Inhale when you take the head towards the shoulder, exhale when you take the chin to the collarbone.
- Backward neck rotation:

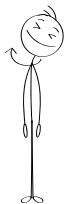


Fig 3.4

- Inhale and take your head back, rotate your head gently from side to side to each shoulder.
- Exhale when you take the head towards the shoulder, and inhale when you take the head back to the center.
- Do this very slowly and carefully without any jerks.

Benefits: Releases tension and stiffness in the head, neck, and shoulder region.

Contraindications: Same as previous

BHUJA BALI SHAKTI VIKASAKA -1

Arm Raise

Practice Steps:



Fig3.5



Fig3.6

- Stand on your mat. Inhale and raise the right arm sideways to shoulder height, with the palm facing outward.

- Exhale and bring the arm down. Repeat with the left arm.
- Inhale and raise both arms, palms facing each other.
- Exhale and bring your arms down to the sides of your body.
- Synchronize your breath with each movement. Repeat and relax.

Benefits: Relieves tension and strain in the neck, shoulders, and arms.

Contraindications: For those with frozen shoulders, lift the arm only as high as is comfortable, avoiding strain. Individuals with other shoulder conditions should proceed slowly and carefully.

PURNA BHUJA SHAKTI VIKASAKA -2

Arm Rotation

Practice Steps:

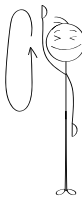


Fig3.7

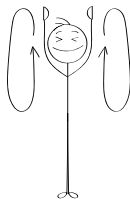
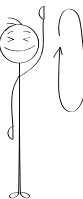


Fig3.8

- Stand on your mat, feet together, and

- gently rotate each arm clockwise and counterclockwise, an equal number of times.
- This can be done with one arm at a time and/or both arms together.
- Rotate gently without jerking.
- Inhale as the arm goes up and exhale as the arm comes down.
- Repeat a few rounds and relax.

Benefits: Same as previous

Contraindications: Same as previous

KATISHAKTI VIKASAKA-1:

Arch bend

Practice Steps:



Fig3.9

- Standing on your mat, interlock your fingers behind backwards.
- Inhale and arch your back, bending backward.
- Exhale and come all the way forward, relaxing the head in the final position.
- Extend the arms with interlocked

hands as far as possible. You may slightly bend the knees if the back is stiff to assist with bending forward.

- Inhale and slowly come up to a straight position.
- Take additional breaths if needed. Make sure not to hold your breath at any point.

Benefits: Strengthens and improves flexibility in the back muscles, stretches the hamstrings, gluteal muscles, and increases shoulder mobility.

Contraindications: People with spinal conditions, back pain, shoulder condition, high and low blood pressure, vertigo or heart conditions should do this with care.

KATISHAKTI VIKASAKA-2:

Arch bend with feet apart

Practice Steps:

- Stand with your feet wide apart and place both your hands on your waist.
- Inhale and arch backward. Exhale and bend forward slowly, keeping the spine straight.

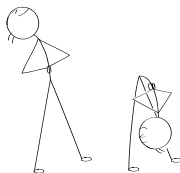


Fig3.10

- Keep the knees as straight as possible.
- Do this slowly and carefully.
- Do not hold your breath.

Benefits: Same as previous with additional focus on the lower back.

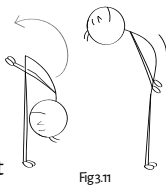
Contraindications: Same as previous

KATISHAKTI VIKASAKA-3

Spring bend

Practice Steps:

- Stand with your feet slightly apart and arms by your side.
- Inhale and arch backward; exhale and bend forward keeping arms by your sides throughout.
- This is a dynamic movement exercise.



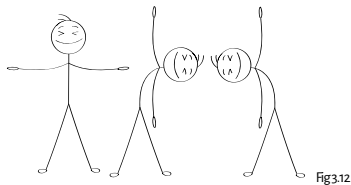
Benefits: Same as previous

Contraindications: Same as previous

KATISHAKTI VIKASAKA-4

Side bend

Practice Steps:



- Keeping your feet hip-width apart, raise both arms to shoulder level, parallel to the floor.
- Slowly slide to the right side, so that the right-hand moves towards the right leg and the left arm reaches upward.
- Come back to the center and slide to the left side similarly.
- As you bend sideways keep your spine aligned and your palms facing forward.
- Exhale while bending sideways and inhale while coming back up.
- Be careful not to lean forward or backward while bending as this is a side bend. The stretch needs to be sideways only.
- In the beginning, you may practice this with wall support, keeping your body aligned against the wall.

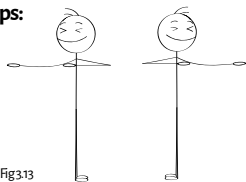
Benefits: Strengthens and improves flexibility in the hips and waist, may help ease lower back pain.

Contraindications: Perform with caution if you have a weak lower back or hip condition. If present, perform the movement slowly and avoid bending too far.

KATISHAKTI VIKASAKA – 5

Spinal twist

Practice Steps:



- Keeping your feet shoulder-width apart, raise your arms forward, parallel to each other. Inhale at the center, and with exhalation, start twisting.
- Twist your spine by moving your arms sideways, to the left and right a few times.
- Inhale in the center and exhale while twisting.
- Keep your arms parallel to the floor. Repeat a few rounds and relax.

Benefits: Strengthens and improves mobility in the spine, may help ease back and shoulder pain.

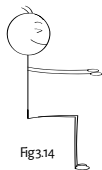
Contraindications: People with spinal or shoulder conditions should perform this exercise with care and gradually develop their capacity.

JANGHASHAKTI VIKASAKA -1

Hip opening

Practice Steps:

- Keeping your feet hip-distance apart, inhale and raise both arms in front of you, parallel to the floor.
- Exhale and bring your hips down so that your thighs are parallel to the floor, and your knees are aligned with your ankles, in line with your toes, without crossing them forward.
- Keep your back as upright as possible.
- Hold this posture for a few breaths.
- Inhale and come back up.
- Repeat a few times.



Benefits: Strengthens the ankles, calf muscles, thighs, knees, and core muscles. Improves posture and leg mobility.

Contraindications: People with knee weakness or knee conditions should perform this exercise with care and only lower themselves as far as is comfortable. If the condition is severe, it's best to avoid this exercise.

JANGHA SHAKTI VIKASAKA - 2

Dancers Pose

Practice Steps:

- Stand with your heels together and toes apart.
- Place your hands either on your waist or sideways.
- Inhale and rise on the toes.
- Exhale and go down spreading the knees sideways.
- Squat down gently so that your hips come close to your heels, but do not touch them.
- Inhale and come back to the center.
- Repeat a few times and relax.

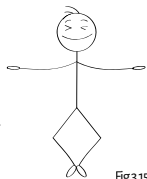


Fig 3.15

Benefits: Strengthens the thighs, knees, and core muscles. Opens the hips

Contraindications: Same as previous

PADA-MULA SHAKTI VIKASAKA – 1

Heels up and down

Practice Steps:

- Stand on your mat with your feet hip-width apart and raise your heels by standing on your toes.
- Hold for 10-15 seconds with normal breathing.
- Release and bring the heels back on to the mat.
- Repeat a few times.



Fig 3.16

Benefits: Strengthens the ankles and toes. Helps with balance. Stretches and loosens the spine.

Contraindications: People with injuries in their feet and ankles should avoid them.

PADA-MULA SHAKTI VIKASAKA – 2

Toe jumping

Practice Steps:

Standing on your mat with feet hip distance apart, start jumping a few times on your toes and relax.



Fig 3.17

Benefits: Same as previous.

Contraindications: Same as previous



Chapter 4

Surya Namasakara

Surya Namaskara, or Sun Salutation, is a sequence of twelve postures performed as a continuous flow, each posture smoothly transitioning into the next. This practice honors the sun as a source of life and energy, embodying gratitude and reverence. It is a comprehensive exercise that revitalizes the body, enhances flexibility, and promotes mental focus and spiritual awareness.

Surya Namaskara can be seen as a form of offering salutations to the sun, and all that it represents on the micro and macrocosmic levels. In yogic terms this indicates that Surya Namaskar awakens the Solar aspects of an individual's nature and releases this vital energy for the development of higher awareness.

Benefits:

- It stimulates and balances all bodily systems
- Increases the concentration and calmness
- Stretches all abdominal organs and improves digestion
- Remove excessive fat from the body
- Improves blood circulation throughout the body.
- Increases strength and endurance.

Contraindications:

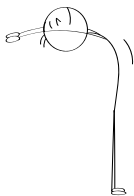
- Suryanamaskara should not be practiced by people suffering from an acute case of high blood pressure, hernia, heart disease, and those who have had a stroke.
- People with back problems should consult a physician
- It should not be practiced during fever and inflammation.
- Suryanamaskara should be avoided during menstruation as well.

To keep in mind:

- Begin with an intention or prayer
- Each movement is synched with the breath—inhalation as you extend, and exhalation as you fold or contract..
- The pace can be adjusted to suit one's comfort level—slow for relaxation and meditation, or fast for increasing energy.
- Try facing the sun while practicing.



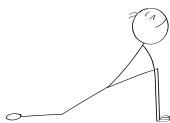
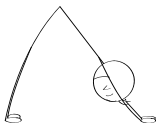
Step 1 - Pranamasana



Step 2 - Hasta Uttanasana



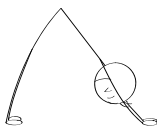
Step 3 - Pada Hastasana

Step 4 - Ashwa
Sanchalanasana

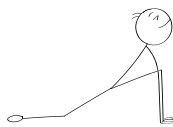
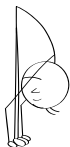
Step 5 - Parvatasana

Step 6 - Ashtanga
Namaskara

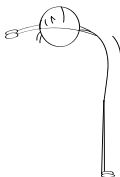
Step 7 - Bhujangasana



Step 8 - Parvatasana

Step 9 - Ashwa
Sanchalanasana

Step 10 - Pada Hastasana



Step 11 - Hasta Uttanasana



Step 12 - Pranamasana

Complete Surya Namaskara Sequence (Fig 4.1)

1. Pranamasana

Breathing: Exhale

Chakra: Ajna Chakra

Mantra: Om Mitraya Namaha

- Stand at the beginning of your mat, keep your feet together or in a V shape and balance your weight equally on both feet.
- Expand your chest and relax your shoulders. As you breathe in, lift both arms up from the sides, and as you exhale, bring your palms together in front of the chest in a prayer position.



Fig4.2

2. Hasta Uttanasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Vishuddhi

Mantra: Om Ravaye Namaha

- Breathing in, lift the arms up and back, palms facing forward, keeping the biceps close to the ears.
- Bend back from the lower back pushing your pelvis slightly forward and keeping your knees straight.



Fig4.3

3. Pada Hastasana

Breathing: Exhale

Chakra: Manipura

Mantra: Om Suryaya Namaha

- Breathing out, bend forward from the waist keeping the spine straight.
- As you exhale completely, bring the hands down to the floor beside the feet.
- You may bend your knees, if necessary, to bring your palms down to the floor.



Fig4.4

4. Ashwa Sanchalanasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Swadhisthana

Mantra: Om Bhaanave Namaha

- Breathing in, push your right leg back, as far back as possible.
- Bring the right knee to the floor and look up.
- Ensure your left foot is between both palms and your knee and ankle are in a straight line.

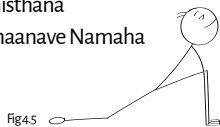


Fig4.5

5. Parvatasana

Breathing: Exhale

Chakra: Sahasrara

Mantra: Om Khagaya
Namaha

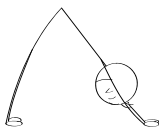


Fig 4.6

- Exhale as you lift your hips up and back, coming into an inverted V.
- Press your hands firmly into the mat, spreading your fingers wide.
- Lengthen your spine, relax your head between your arms, and press your heels toward the floor.

6. Ashtanga Namaskara

Breathing: Inhale and exhale

Chakra: Anahata

Mantra: Om Pushne Namaha

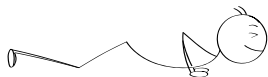


Fig 4.7

- Gently bring your knees down to the floor and exhale.
- Take your hips back slightly, slide forward, and rest your chest and chin on the floor.
- Raise your posterior a little bit. The two hands, two feet, two knees, chest, and chin (eight parts of the body) should touch the floor.

7. Bhujangasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Mooladhara

Mantra: Om Hiranyagarbaya Namaha



Fig 4.8

- Slide the chest forward in a prone position, keeping the palms beside the chest and the knees and feet together with toes curled out.

8. Parvatasana

Breathing: Exhale

Chakra: Sahasrara

Mantra: Om Marichaye Namaha

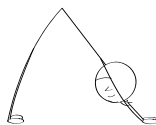


Fig 4.9

- Breathing out, lift the hips and the tailbone up to bring the body into an inverted V.

9. Ashwa Sanchalanasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Swadhisthana

Mantra: Om Aadityaaya Namaha

9. Ashwa Sanchalanasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Swadhisthana

Mantra: Om Aadityaaya Namaha

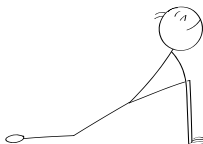


Fig 4.10

- Breathing in, bring the right foot forward in between the two hands. The left knee goes down on the floor. Press the hips down and look up.

- Raise the hands up and bend backward slightly, pushing the hips slightly outward.

12. Pranamasana

Breathing: Exhale followed by Normal

Breathing

Chakra: Ajna

Mantra: Om Bhaskaraya Namaha



Fig 4.13

- Bring your palms back in front of your chest as you exhale.

10. Pada Hastasana

Breathing: Exhale

Chakra: Manipura

Mantra: Om Savitre Namaha



Fig 4.11

- Breathing out, bring the left foot forward.
- Keep the palms on the floor. You may bend the knees, if necessary.

11. Hasta Uttanasana

Breathing: Inhale

Chakra: Vishuddhi

Mantra: Om Arkaaya Namaha

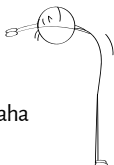


Fig 4.12

- Breathing in, roll the spine up.

ISHAVASYA UPANISHAD - VERSE

15

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥ १५ ॥

*hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam
mukham |
tattvaṃ pūṣannapāvṛṇu satyadharmāya
dṛṣṭaye || 15 ||*

15. The entrance of the True is covered as if
by a golden vessel. Remove, O sun, the
covering that I who have been
worshipping "The True" may behold it.

Chapter 5

Asana

The practice of Asanas, or yoga poses, is a fundamental aspect of yoga, serving not just to improve physical health but also to prepare the body and mind for deeper spiritual practices. It is also a tool for cultivating discipline, awareness, and a deeper connection with the inner self.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, outlines asanas as one of the eight limbs of yoga, emphasizing their role in achieving mental steadiness and physical health, which are prerequisites for meditation. "Sthira sukham asanam," Patanjali succinctly advises, meaning an asana is perfect when it is both steady and comfortable.

This chapter introduces various asanas categorized as follows:

Standing Asanas

- Tadasana (Palm tree Pose)
- Pada Hastasana (Standing Forward Bend Pose)
- Ardha Chakrasana (Standing backward bend)
- Ardha Kati Chakrasana (Standing

side bend)

- Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)
- Vrikshasana (Tree Pose)

Sitting Asanas

- Dandasana
- Paschimottanasana
- Janu Sirsasana
- Ardha Ushtrasana
- Baddha Konasana
- Vakrasana
- Bhadrasana
- Vajrasana
- Balasana

Supine Asanas

- Savasana
- Setu Bandhasana
- Supta Baddha Konasana
- Sarala Matsyasana
- Dwipada Uttanapadasana
- Supta Pawanamuktasana

Prone Asanas

- Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose)
- Salabhasana (Locust Pose)
- Makarasana (Crocodile Pose)

TADASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand with feet together or hip-width, arms by sides.
- Steady body, distribute weight equally on both feet.
- Raise arms overhead, interlock fingers, turn palms up, place hands on head.
- Fix eyes on a point slightly above head level on the wall.
- Inhale, stretch arms, shoulders, chest upward.
- Raise heels, coming onto toes, stretch body top to bottom, maintain balance.
- Breathe normally, practice improves balance.
- Exhale, lower heels, bring hands to head.
- This completes one round.

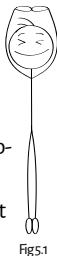


Fig 5.1

must take care or avoid it. Those with ankle injury need not stand on toes but simply stretch the arms up.

PADAHASTASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand with spine erect, feet together, hands by sides.
- Relax and evenly distribute weight on both feet.
- Inhale, raise arms above head, straight and shoulder-width.
- Exhale, slowly bend forward, chin up, spine straight, arms next to ears.
- Bend from lower back, avoid arching spine.
- Place palms or fingertips near the floor beside feet, relax neck.
- Keep knees straight, forehead close to or touching knees. Relax back.
- Slowly return to starting position, keeping spine straight and arms next to ears.
- Relax upright before the next round.



Fig 5.2

Benefits: This asana develops physical and mental balance. The entire spine is stretched and loosened, helping to clear up congestion of the spinal nerves at the points where they emerge from the spinal column.

Contraindications: People with vertigo

Benefits: This asana massages and tones the digestive organs, alleviates flatulence, constipation, and indigestion. Inverting the trunk can increase vitality, improve metabolism, concentration, helps with

nasal and throat disease.

Contraindications: This asana should not be practiced by people suffering from serious back complaints, sciatica, heart disease, high blood pressure or abdominal hernia. Cautions for inverted postures apply.

ARDHA CHAKRASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand straight, place hands on lower back, fingers facing down.
- Roll shoulders back, bring elbows close together.
- Inhale slowly, bend upper body backward with hands, as far as possible.
- Hold position for a few seconds to a minute, breathe through nose.
- Exhale, slowly return to standing position, hands by sides.

Benefits: Strengthens the back and abdominal muscles. It tones the organs in the abdomen including the digestive, excretory, and reproductive organs. It is good for back problems and postural defects. It opens the chest & strengthens



the arms and shoulder muscles.

Contraindications: It should not be done by those suffering from any neck, hip, or spinal injury. Be cautious while doing this pose in case of vertigo. Those suffering from high blood pressure should avoid this pose.

ARDHAKATICHAKRASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand straight, feet together (beginners may keep feet apart), hands by side.
- Inhale, lift right arm over head.
- Exhale, bend to left, relax left arm.
- Maintain posture, focus on breath.
- Inhale slowly, return to center, exhale, lower hand, relax.
- Repeat on opposite side.

Benefits: It helps in strengthening back muscles and relieving constipation. It also helps in burning belly fat, improving the flexibility of hip joints, improves breathing.

Contraindications: Avoid this asana if you are suffering from neck, spinal, or hip injury, ulcers, or hernia. Avoid



performing, if you have high blood pressure. Be extra careful when attempting this asana if you have vertigo.

TRIKONASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand erect, feet 4ft to 5ft apart, adjust for balance.
- Turn right foot out, stretch arms sideways to shoulder level, in a straight line.
- Turn chin right, bend right with exhalation, avoid leaning forward.
- Bend knees if necessary, aiming to keep them straight, kneecaps pulled up.
- Align arms, turn both palms forward.
- Look up at left hand in final position.
- To exit, turn chin down, inhale and rise, turn chin forward, lower hands, return to start.
- Repeat on the opposite side.

Benefits: This affects the muscles on the sides of the trunk, the waist, and the back of the legs. It stimulates the nervous system and alleviates nervous depression. It improves digestion. It also strengthens the pelvic area and tones the



Fig 5.5

reproductive organs. Regular practice will help to reduce fat from the waistline.

Contraindications: This asana should not be performed by those suffering from back conditions, knee injuries, frozen shoulder issues, vertigo, high blood pressure.

VRIKSHASANA

Practice Steps:

- Stand straight, arms by, sides focus on a point ahead.
- Bend right knee, place right foot on left thigh, sole flat and firm.
- Ensure left leg is straight, find balance.
- Once balanced, inhale, raise arms overhead, palms together in Anjali mudra.
- Look straight ahead, steady gaze for balance. Exhale slowly, lower hands, release right leg.
- Stand tall, repeat with left leg on right thigh.

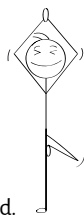


Fig 5.6

Benefits: It brings balance and equilibrium to the mind. It helps improve concentration. This posture has been found to relieve some cases of sciatica. It

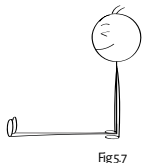
makes the legs strong, improves balance, and opens the hips.

Contraindications: Avoid doing this posture if suffering from migraine, insomnia, low or high blood pressure (those with high blood pressure may do this pose but without raising their hands overhead, as this may further raise their blood pressure).

DANDASANA

Practice Steps:

- Begin in the seated position with your legs extended forward.
- Bring your hands next to your hips and straighten them & place your palms on the floor.
- Flex your ankles with your toes tucked in.
- Roll your shoulders back, open the chest.
- Inhale and raise both arms up, stretching the upper body up.
- Hold in this posture for a few deep breaths.
- To exit the pose, release your arms and shake out your legs.



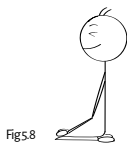
Benefits: This asana strengthens the back muscles and improves your posture. It also stretches your upper body, including your shoulders and chest.

Contraindications: People with the condition of the sciatic nerve must avoid intense leg stretching in Dandasana. However, mild stretching can be done. Avoid practicing Dandasana in case of back and wrist injury.

VAJRASANA

Practice Steps:

- Sit with legs stretched forward.
- Bend knees, place buttocks between heels toes not overlapping.
- Hands on knees, palms down, back and head straight, avoid spine arching.
- Close eyes, relax arms and body, breathe normally, focus on breath flow.
- To release, place fists in front of knees, lift hips, let blood flow to feet.
- Turn legs to one side, stretch legs forward. If thighs pain, slightly separate knees while maintaining the posture.
- Beginners with ankle ache: release



posture, stretch legs, shake feet, then resume.

Benefits: Vajrasana alters the flow of blood and nervous impulse in the pelvic region and strengthens the pelvic muscles. It is a good against hernia and also helps to relieve piles. It increases the efficiency of the entire digestive system, relieving stomach ailments such as hyperacidity and peptic ulcers. Vajrasana is a important meditation posture because the body becomes upright and straight with no effort.

Contraindications: Avoid this posture if you have injuries in your ankle or knees.

BHADRASANA

Practice Steps:

- Sit in Vajrasana, spread knees wide, keeping toes touching the floor.
- Separate feet to let buttocks and perineum rest on the floor between feet.
- Gently widen knees further without straining.
- Place hands on knees, palms facing down.

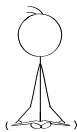


Fig 5.9

Benefits: Bhadrasana alters the flow of blood and nervous impulses in the pelvic region and strengthens the pelvic muscles. It is a preventative measure against hernia and also helps to relieve piles. It reduces the blood flow to the genitals and massages the nerve fibers which feed them, making it useful in dilated veins of the testicles and hydrocele in men.

Contraindications: Please avoid this practice if you're suffering from joint pain and or if you have had surgery in your knees or ankles.

ARDHA USHTRASANA

Practice Steps:

- Sit in Vajrasana.
- Stand on knees, legs hip-distance apart, ankles relaxed.
- Place hands on lower back and hips, open chest, elbows towards each other.
- Inhale, lean back from lower back, keeping the lower back supported point the chest to the roof.
- Push hips forward, keep thighs vertical, bend head and spine backward comfortably.



Fig 5.10

- Relax the body, especially back muscles into the stretch
- Hold as long as comfortable, breathing normally.
- Exhale, slowly return to start, straightening the spine releasing hands from back.
- Rest in Balasana (Child's Pose).

Benefits: This asana is beneficial for the digestive and reproductive systems. It stretches the stomach and intestines, alleviating constipation. The backward bend loosens up the vertebrae relieving backache, rounded back, and drooping shoulders.

Contraindications: People with severe back ailments such as lumbago should not attempt this asana without the guidance of a competent teacher.

Counter Asana- Paschimottasana

BADDHA KONASANA

Practice Steps:

- Sit in Dandasana with legs outstretched
- Bend the knees and bring the soles of the feet together,



keeping the heels as close to the body as possible.

- Fully relax the inner thigh muscles.
- Clasp the feet with both hands and keeping a straight spine hold the position for as long as possible.
- Try to touch the knees to the ground as you hold the pose deeper without straining.
- Do not use any force.

Benefits: Both stages prepare the legs for mastery of padmasana and other meditative asanas. The inner thigh muscles and hamstrings hold a lot of tension which is relieved by these asanas. They also remove tiredness from long hours of standing and walking.

Contraindications: People with sciatica and sacral conditions should avoid this asana.

JANU SHIRASANA



Practice Steps:

- Sit with legs outstretched, feet together. Bend left leg, heel to perineum, sole against right thigh

with left knee on floor.

- Inhale, lift hands, stretch spine.
- Bend forward from lower back, grasp right foot or hold ankle/hands on right leg.
- Aim to touch knee with forehead, final position.
- Keep back relaxed, do not strain, hold as comfortable, keep breathing.
- To release, stretch hands forward, come up with inhalation.
- Repeat with right leg.

Benefits: This asana stretches the hamstring muscles and increases flexibility in the hip joints. It tones and massages the entire abdominal and pelvic region, including the liver, pancreas, spleen, urogenital system, kidneys, and adrenal glands. It helps to remove excess weight in this area and stimulates circulation to the nerves and muscles of the spine.

Contraindications: People who suffer from slipped disc, sciatica, or hernia should not practice.

Counter Asana- Ardha/Purna Ushtrasana

PASCHIMOTTANASANA (SEATED FORWARD FOLD)

Practice Steps:



Fig5.12

- Sit on floor, legs stretched, feet together, hands on knees.
- Relax body, lift hands, inhale and stretch spine up, exhale and fold forward from hips.
- Grasp big toes or hold heels, ankles, or any reachable part of legs without bending knees. Relax head down.
- Move slowly, without forcing. Hold for a few seconds.
- Relax back and leg muscles for gentle stretch, also relax stomach and abdominal muscles.
- Aim to touch knees with forehead without straining.
- Maintain position comfortably, breathe in final posture.
- Inhale, slowly return to starting position, aligning hands with head.

Benefits and Contraindication: Same as Janushirsasana

Counter Asana: Ardha / Purna Ushtrasana

VAKRASANA

Practice Steps:



Fig5.13

- Sit on floor, legs out, hands by side.
- Bend left leg, sole on floor, right leg straight, toes towards you.
- Left hand behind you, back straight, do not lean.
- Inhale and raise your right hand up.
- Exhale and twist the trunk towards the left and bring the right hand over the left
- Place the right hand over the left toe or hold the left ankle with the right hand.
- Left hand behind for support, neck twisted left, in line with trunk.
- Breathe normally, hold as comfortable.
- Release by untwisting, hands to side, straighten left leg.
- Repeat on right side.

Benefits: Vakrasana tones all the organs in the abdomen. It improves digestion and removes constipation. It is also good for the liver. It improves the function of the pancreas and is good for diabetes. It gives a good twist to the spine and makes the spine flexible.

Contraindications: Those suffering from any injury of the hips, shoulders, and neck should not do this asana. Vakrasana should not be attempted by those who have undergone any recent surgery on the thorax, abdomen, or hips.

BALASANA (CHILD POSE)

Practice Steps:

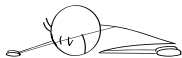


Fig5.14

- Kneel on the floor.
- Touch your big toes together and sit on your heels.
- Exhale and fold forward; lay your torso down between your thighs.
- Lengthen your arms forward and try to touch the forehead on the floor without raising your hips from your heels.
- Don't overlap the toes one over the other.
- Relax in this pose.

Benefits: Helps to improve digestion. Helps in alleviating stress and tension. Stretches the spine and reduces back pain. Improves sleep

Contraindications: Anyone with an ankle, shoulder, hip, or knee joint injury must avoid practising this asana.

Counter Asana: Ardha / Purna
Ushtrasana

MAKARASANA (CROCODILE POSE)

Practice Steps:



Fig 5.15

- Lie down on your stomach.
- Bring your arms together to form a pillow and rest your forehead on the forearms.
- Legs apart with your toes pointing outward.
- Relax.

Benefits: This asana is very effective for people suffering from slipped disc, sciatica, lower back pain or any other spinal disorder. They should remain in this asana for extended periods of time as it encourages the vertebral column to resume its normal shape and releases compression of the spinal nerves. Asthmatics and people who have any other lung ailments should practise this simple asana regularly with breath awareness as it allows more air to enter the lungs. Promotes deep relaxation.

Contraindications: Those with back conditions should not practise this asana if any pain is experienced.

BHUJANGASANA (COBRA POSE)

Practice Steps:



Fig 5.16

- Lie down on your stomach and place your palms next to your chest.
- Slide the chest forward and raise first the head, the shoulders, then, straightening the elbows, arch the back into the cobra pose.
- Inhale when you do this)
- This will lower the buttocks and hips to the floor.
- Bend the head back and direct the gaze upward to the eyebrow center.
- The thighs and hips remain on the floor and the arms support the trunk.
- Unless the spine is very flexible the arms will remain slightly bent.
- Ensure to keep the heels together and tighten the buttock.

Benefits: This asana improves and deepens breathing. It can help to remove

backache and keep the spine supple and healthy. It tones the ovaries and uterus, and helps in menstrual disorders.

Contraindications: Not advised for people suffering from peptic ulcer, hernia, intestinal tuberculosis or hyperthyroidism.

SARALASHALABHASANA (LOCUST POSE)

Practice Steps:



Fig5.17

- Lie down on the ground on the belly and put the palms on the ground.
- Keep the legs at hip level distance. If possible, keep them together to deepen the practice
- Put both the hands beneath the stomach or below the hip bone with palms facing the thighs and raise the right leg feet as high as possible. (With inhalation)
- Ensure the hip bone does not lift up & the hip does not tilt. Hold the posture for a few seconds and then bring it down with exhalation,

joining the legs together.

- Repeat the above steps with the left leg.
- For Purna Shalabhasana- practice the same asana by lifting both legs up. Ensure to keep both legs together. Keep your upper body on the floor.

Benefits: It increases blood circulation, helps in reducing weight. The spine and waist become flexible.

Contraindications: Avoid this asana if you have acute back pain, severe sciatica or slip disc. Women diagnosed with a prolapsed uterus also avoid this asana.

SETHUBANDHASANA (BRIDGE POSE)

Practice Steps:



Fig5.18

- Lie down on the back.
- Bend or fold the knees and keep the feet at hip distance apart on the floor. The knees and ankles in a straight line and knees should not cross over ankles in the final position.
- Take the arms beside the body, palms facing down.

- With inhalation, slowly lift the lower back, middle back and upper back off the floor.
- Now gently roll in the shoulders; touch the chest to the chin without bringing the chin down, supporting the weight with the shoulders, arms, and feet.
- Now feel the bottom firm up in this pose. Thighs are parallel to each other and to the floor.
- Interlace the fingers and push the hands on the floor to lift the torso a little more up, or support the back with the palms.
- Keep breathing normally and slowly.

Benefits: Bridge Pose gives Strength to the back muscles. It relieves the tired back instantly. Stretches chest, neck, and spine. Gives calmness to the brain, reduces the level of anxiety, stress, and depression. It improves digestion and is good for women in menopause and menstrual pain.

Contraindications: Do not try or avoid doing this pose if suffering from neck and back injuries.

SARALA MATSYASANA (SUPPORTED FISH POSE)

Practice Steps:



Fig 5.19

- Lie down on the back, with hands alongside the body and feet together.
- Carefully lift up the chest to bend backward, supporting the body with the arms and elbows.
- Use your elbows or place the hands close to the shoulders and lift up from there.
- Lower the crown of the head to the floor.
- Place the palms on the thighs or by the side of the body resting on the floor
- Close your eyes and breathe slowly and deeply.
- Return to the starting position, reversing the order of movements.

Benefits: This asana stretches the intestines and abdominal organs and is useful for all abdominal ailments. Alleviates backache, regulates the function of the thyroid gland. The pelvic

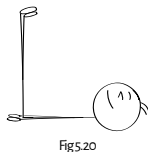
region is given a good stretch.

Contraindications: People who suffer from heart disease, peptic ulcers, hernia, back conditions, or any serious illness should not practice this asana. Pregnant women should also not attempt it.

UTTANAPADASANA (EKA PADA & DWI PADA)

Practice Steps:

- Lie down on the mat. Both the feet and knees should be kept together, the palms facing downwards or supporting the lower back.
- The breathing should be normal.
- While breathing in, slowly raise the leg to a 90-degree angle without jerking the legs.
- Do not raise the shoulders from the ground. Breathe normally in the final position and hold for a few seconds.
- The upper body, arms, and face are to be relaxed. Do not bend the knee or lift the lower body or buttocks from the floor.
- Pointing the toes towards yourself,



bring the leg down to 45 degrees and then to 10 degrees (a few inches off the floor).

- In the final position, the legs is straight with the toes pointed towards the head.
- While releasing, exhaling slowly lower the legs. Relax and breathe normally.
- Those experiencing discomfort could also make use of a wall to rest their legs on.

Benefits: Uttanpadasana strengthens the abdominal muscles. The pressure on the abdominal wall tones all the organs in the abdomen. It strengthens the lower back muscles helping to relieve lower back pain. It also strengthens the hamstring muscles.

Uttanpadasana also improves the functioning of the digestive organs. It improves digestion and removes constipation.

Contraindications: Contraindicated for lower back aches, high BP, people recovering from injury to the spine, and during menstruation. Those who have a slipped disc should consult a doctor before doing this.

SUPTA BADDHA KONASANA (RECLINED BOUND ANGLE POSE)

Practice Steps:

- Start with a sitting dandasana, i.e., sit with your spine erect and legs stretched out, feet touching each other and toes pointing upwards
- Now bend your knees and bring your feet towards the pelvis. The soles of your feet should touch each other, making a diamond shape with legs
- Grab your feet with your hands. You may place the hands underneath the feet for support and make an effort to bring the heels as close to the perineum as possible
- Gently breathe in and make a gentle effort to make the chest and the spine erect
- Once you feel comfortable, you may gently lie down and rest your back on the floor. Your arms can rest on your inner thighs
- Relax your muscles and take 5-10 deep breaths in this position

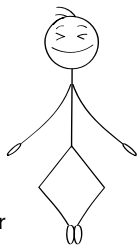


Fig 5.21

- To come out, you can either stretch your legs and relax for a few minutes. Then roll onto your right side and with the help of your hands gently sit up.

Benefits: Stimulates abdominal organs like the ovaries and prostate gland, bladder, and kidneys. Stimulates the heart and improves general circulation. Stretches the inner thighs, groins, and knees. Helps relieve the symptoms of stress, mild depression, menstruation and menopause. Helps relieve the symptoms of stress, mild depression, menstruation and menopause.

Contraindications: If you are suffering from groin or knee injury, make sure you keep a blanket under the outer thighs for support. Sciatica patients should either completely avoid the pose or sit on a cushion to raise the hips.

SUPTA PAVANAMUKTASANA (WIND-RELEASE POSE)

Practice Steps:

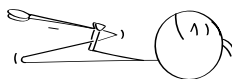


Fig 5.22

- Lie on your back and relax. Bend the knees and bring the thigh to the chest.
- Interlock the fingers and clasp the hands on the shin just below the knees. Inhale deeply, filling the lungs as much as possible.
- Exhaling, raise the head and shoulders off the ground and without straining bring the knees to the nose.
- Remain in the final position for a few seconds. While slowly inhaling, return to the base position. Relax the body.

Benefits: Strengthens the lower back muscles and loosens the spinal vertebrae. It massages the abdomen and the digestive organs and is therefore very effective in removing wind and constipation.

Contraindications: Not to be performed by persons suffering from high blood pressure or serious back conditions such as sciatica and slipped disc.

SHAVASANA (CORPSE POSE)

Practice Steps:

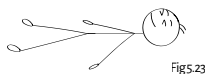


Fig 5.23

- Lie down on your back & completely relax.
- Legs wide apart / to the respective ends of your mat and the hands by the side of your body with the palms facing upwards.
- Bring your awareness to the entire body, breath and mind.
- Consciously relax every part of the body.
- Stay in this posture for 5-10 minutes.
- Wiggle your toes and fingers. Move your neck from left to right and back. Turn to your right. Stay in this position for a few breaths.
- Sit upright in cross-legged position.

Benefits: Relaxes the body deeply, helps the body to absorb the benefits of the asanas. Calms central nervous system, aiding the digestive and immune systems. Reduces headache, fatigue and anxiety. Helps lower blood pressure

Contraindications: Lie on the back with cushion if you have a back problem.



Chapter 6

Pranayama

Pranayama, the practice of working with the prana, is a key aspect of yoga that enhances physical and mental well-being. The word pranayama is composed of two Sanskrit words prāṇa and āyāma. Prāṇa means subtle life force (prāṇaśakti) and āyāma means expansion, control and extension.

Prāṇaśakti provides energy to different organs (including mind) and also controls several vital life processes. Prāṇa is a self-energizing force which embraces the body with its expansion, extension and control.

According to Maharishi Patanjali definition of Pranayama is

tasmin sati shvasa-prashvasyor-gati-vichchedah pranayamah ||49P.Y.S

Once harmony with the physical body has been achieved, through interruption of the movement engendered by inhaling and exhaling you attempt to harmonize your energy (pranayama). |49||

Effects of Pranayama

Pranayama practices have effects on all dimensions of human personality. On the physical level, breathing practices directly affect the respiratory mechanism and the organs involved, and make them healthy and effective. Because oxygen intake is crucial for a healthy body, when breathing improves general health of all body systems improve.

Hatha Pradipika asserts that proper practice of pranayama can eliminate all types of diseases. Also, Every state of mind is reflected by a corresponding change in the breathing pattern.

Through various breathing techniques, pranayama helps regulate the flow of prana) throughout the body, promoting relaxation, concentration, and inner peace. This chapter explores eight fundamental pranayama techniques, each offering unique benefits to the practitioner.

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

Diaphragmatic Breathing is the natural way of breathing, in line with the structure of our organic body. Inhalation pushes the diaphragm down, thereby releasing the abdominal organs outwards.

There is a resultant expansion of the belly. Exhalation pulls the diaphragm upwards, flattening the abdomen. Abdominal breathing optimizes the capacity of lungs and makes the breath rhythmic and relaxing.

Practice Steps:

- Sit in a cross-legged position, spine straight & head center.
- Gently close your eyes.
- Relax your body and place the palms of your hands on the abdomen with your fingers pointing towards your navel.
- Place your stretched out fingers on either side of your abdomen with the middle fingers at the navel.
- Inhale and allow your diaphragm to move downwards. Feel the expansion of your abdomen. Do



Fig 6.1

not put any pressure on your abdomen muscles; let them expand naturally.

- When you are ready to exhale, simply repeat the movement in your mind. Your abdomen will deflate as the air is expelled.
- Ensure that your exhalation is as slow as possible. This will help you to breathe rhythmically.
- Once you start breathing in a natural flow, start deepening, lengthening and extending your breathing. In simple words, let the abdomen expand fully as you inhale and deflate it completely as you exhale.
- Practice this until you feel that your abdomen is expanding without any force or effort.

Benefits:

- Stress Reduction.
- Improved Respiratory Function.
- Enhanced Oxygenation.
- Strengthened Respiratory Muscles.
- Promotion of Relaxation.

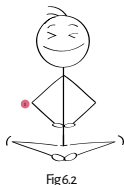
Contraindications: Avoid retention of breath if you have a heart condition or high bp.

SECTIONAL BREATHING

Sectional breathing is a yogic technique that divides the breath into parts, focusing separately on the abdomen, chest, and clavicular areas. This practice enhances lung capacity, improves respiratory efficiency, and promotes relaxation by encouraging mindful, deep breathing, leading to better stress management and increased mindfulness.

1. Abdominal breathing

Abdominal breathing or vertical breathing is the natural way of breathing, in line with the structure of our organic body. Inhalation pushes the diaphragm down, thereby releasing the abdominal organs outwards. There is a resultant expansion of the belly. Exhalation pulls the diaphragm upwards, flattening the abdomen. While inhalation is dynamic, exhalation is passive.



firmly grounded or sit in a cross legged position. While lying down, place the hands in line with the shoulders, palms facing the ceiling.

- Gently close your eyes.
- Relax your body and place the palms on the abdomen with your fingers pointing towards your navel. Place your stretched out fingers on either side of your abdomen with the middle fingers at the navel.
- Inhale and allow your diaphragm to move downwards. Feel the expansion of your abdomen. Do not put any pressure on your abdomen muscles; let them expand naturally.
- When you are ready to exhale, simply repeat the movement in your mind. Your abdomen will deflate as the air is expelled.
- Ensure that your exhalation is as slow as possible. This will help you to breathe rhythmically.
- Once you start breathing in a natural flow, start deepening, lengthening, and extending your breathing. In simple words, let the abdomen expand fully as you inhale and deflate it completely as you exhale.
- Practice this until you feel that your abdomen is expanding without any force or effort.

Practice Steps:

- Either lie down or sit on a chair with

2. Thoracic Breathing

In thoracic breathing, there is heaving of the chest or ribcage. The rib cage expands in all directions with an inhalation. With an exhalation, the ribs revert to their original position. The intake of oxygen is lower than abdominal and the breath tends to be fast. In moments of stress and worry, our breathing becomes heavily chest-oriented instead of the more relaxing abdominal breath.

The unconscious use of this more rapid form of breathing creates a heightened state of tension. To break this unfavorable cycle, slow and deep abdominal breathing is of great assistance. Thoracic breathing is a powerful breath technique for healing respiratory ailments.

Practice Steps:

- Take the same position as the one during abdominal breathing and stay relaxed.
- Place the palms lightly on your ribcage with your fingers stretched out.
- Your little fingers should touch the lower part of the ribcage, while

your fingertips should be holding your ribcage.

- The thumbs should be facing the armpits at the top of the ribcage.
- Do not keep your shoulders lifted or tense; they must be completely relaxed. Start breathing normally. You will observe that your chest moves slightly up with inhalation and down with exhalation. Observe this pattern for a few moments.
- Remember to keep the abdomen still, moving only the chest while breathing. Once the desired pattern of breathing is set, begin to deepen, lengthen and extend that movement. On inhalation, expand and lift the rib cage, filling the lungs completely with air. Then on exhalation, let the lungs relax fully.
- Practice this till the time you feel relaxed and confident about breathing through the chest.

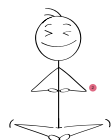


Fig 6.3

3. Collarbone or Clavicular Breathing

This is the last step before the One Complete Yogic Breath. With this type of breathing the air flows into the top of the lungs. With inhalation, the upper part of

the chest and collarbones get lifted, and with exhalation, they come lower. The breath is very shallow and rapid. This type of breathing occurs in situations of extreme stress and panic, or when one is having great difficulty in breathing.

Practice Steps:

- Take the same position as during abdominal and thoracic breathing and keep your body relaxed.
- Take the hands behind the head folding them at the elbow, cross your palms behind the neck, continue to keep the head straight.
- Inhale and let your chest expand and rise at the same time as your collarbone rises. The center of the collarbone (in the area of the larynx) will create an “indentation” in your throat if you are doing it right.
- Slowly exhale and let your chest and collarbone return to their normal position

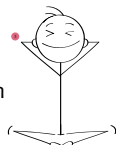


Fig 6.4

with the other into a flowing wave, which proceeds from the bottom to the top of the lungs with the inhalation, and from the top to the bottom with the exhalation. With the inhalation, the abdomen extends forward and the chest is expanded, collar bone rises. With the exhalation the collarbone, chest, and abdomen return to their original position. When one practices this type of breathing utilizing the full lung capacity naturally and without any force, one is said to be practicing the Full Yogic Breath.

Benefits: Practicing sectional breathing can activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for promoting relaxation and reducing stress. It encourages proper alignment of the spine and ribcage, which can help improve posture and reduce strain on the muscles of the back and neck. It also improves circulation.

Contraindications: Don't apply pressure on the abdomen or chest region.

Ribcage or Abdominal Injuries: Sectional breathing techniques that involve deep breathing or movement of the ribcage and abdomen may be contraindicated for individuals with recent ribcage or abdominal injuries.

In a healthy and natural breath, all these three variations, i.e., diaphragmatic breathing, thoracic breathing, and clavicular breathing occur. Each is united

NADI SHUDDHI /ANULOMA VILOMA

Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama, also known as Alternate Nostril Breathing or Anulom Vilom Pranayama, is a powerful yogic breathing practice that helps to purify and balance the energy channels (nadis) in the body. The word "Nadi" refers to subtle energy channels, while "Shuddhi" means purification. This pranayama technique involves alternating the breath between the left and right nostrils using specific hand positions to regulate the flow of energy.

Practice Steps:



Fig6.5

- Close the right nostril with the thumb, exhale completely & then inhale through the left nostril.
- Close the left nostril with the ring finger, then release the thumb and exhale through the right nostril.
- Keep the left nostril closed and inhale back up through the right nostril.
- Close the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril. This

constitutes one round.

- Practice for no more than 10 minutes.

Benefits: Improves lung capacity. Balances all systems of the body. The nerves are calmed and purified, and the mind becomes still and lucid. Its practice keeps the body warm, destroys diseases, gives strength, and brings serenity. Relieves stress and anxiety. Good preparation for meditation as it helps balance both the nadis - Ida and Pingala

Contraindications: This practice has no contraindications if you practice without holding your breath.

UJJAYI

The prefix 'Uj' means upwards or superiority in rank. The word "Ujji" in Sanskrit means "conquest, victory, triumph or success". In Ujjayi Pranayama, the lungs are fully expanded, and the chest is puffed out like that of a proud conqueror. It involves shallow breathing aimed at flexing the diaphragm.

Practice Steps:

- Sit erect in a comfortable position.

- Ujjayi involves partial closure of the glottis both while inhaling as well as exhaling. This is done by tightening the throat region
- properly.
- Inhale slowly and deeply through both nostrils with the generation of a hissing/whispering sound. Fill the lungs to their maximum capacity.
- Exhale slowly, deeply, and steadily again generating the same sound, until the lungs are completely empty.

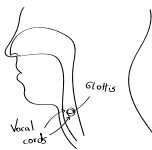


Fig 6.6

Benefits: Aerates the lungs, removes phlegm, gives endurance, soothes the nerves, and tones the entire system. Reduces the risk of diseases caused by the accumulation of bile, wind, or phlegm. Stimulates the thyroid gland. Eases diseases of the lungs, chest, and throat. Improves oxygenation needed in many body functions. Clears the lungs and nasal cavity and strengthens the vocal cord.

Contraindications: Avoid it if you suffer from cardiac problems.

SHEETKARI PRANAYAMA

Sheetkari Pranayama, also known as the Hissing Breath or Cooling Breath, is a breathing technique in yoga that helps to calm the mind, reduce stress, and cool the body.

Practice Steps:

- Sit comfortably in any meditative pose like padmasana, vajrasana, etc.
- Bring your upper and lower teeth together and bring the lips in a big smile. Inhale through the mouth in this way and feel the cool air passing into the mouth.
- Inhale slowly and exhale through the nose, closing your mouth.



Fig 6.7

Benefits: Sheetkari Pranayama is useful in diseases related to the tongue, mouth, and throat. It is very beneficial in diseases of the spleen. Helpful in fever and indigestion. Controls the High B.P. Useful in Pitta related diseases. It purifies the blood. Best for cooling down the body

temperature, reduces hunger and thirst.

Contraindications: People who are low B.P. and those people who are suffering from Asthma, cold and cough, or other respiratory-related problems should not try this.

BRAHMARI PRANAYAMA

Bhramari Pranayama, often referred to as Humming Bee Breath, is a calming and soothing breathing technique in yoga that involves producing a humming sound during exhalation. The name "Bhramari" is derived from the Sanskrit word for "black bee," which reflects the buzzing sound produced during the practice.

Practice Steps:

- Sit in a comfortable meditation asana, preferably padmasana or siddha/siddha yoni asana.
- Close the eyes and relax the body.
- The lips should remain gently closed with the teeth slightly separated throughout the practice.
- This allows the sound vibration to be heard and felt more distinctly.

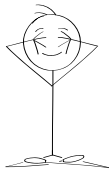


Fig 6.8

- Use the fingers to close the ears by pressing on them gently. This helps to avoid external noise.
- Bring awareness to the center of the head, where the ajna chakra is located, and keep the body still. Inhale through the nose.
- Exhale slowly and in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound like that of the bee. The humming should be smooth, even, and continuous for the duration of the exhalation. The sound should be soft and mellow, making the front of the skull reverberate.
- At the end of the exhalation, inhale and start again. This is one round.
- Practice for as long as comfortable.

Benefits: relieves stress, cerebral tension, and alleviates anger, anxiety, & insomnia. It strengthens and improves the voice. It induces a meditative state by directing the awareness inward. The vibration of the humming sound creates a soothing effect on the mind and nervous system.

Contraindications: People with heart disease should practice without breath retention and at a comfortable pace without straining themselves



Chapter 7

MUDRA

Mudras, or yogic seals or gestures, are a significant aspect of yoga practice that involves specific hand, finger, or body positions. These gestures are believed to influence the flow of prana (life energy) in the body, thereby promoting physical health and spiritual development. This chapter delves into the essence of mudras, explaining their purpose, benefits, and how to incorporate them into your yoga and meditation practices.

Benefits of Practicing Mudras

Mudras are believed to help channel energy flow within the body and focus the mind. By engaging specific hand positions, practitioners can concentrate their attention more deeply on their breath, body, or meditation object.

According to traditional yoga, mudras influence the flow of prana, or life force energy, within the body. Different mudras are thought to stimulate various energy channels (nadis) and energy centers (chakras), helping to bring balance and harmony to the body's subtle

energy system.

Some mudras involve the activation of specific hand muscles and nerves, which can have therapeutic effects on the physical body.

Practicing mudras can also have psychological benefits. The intentional engagement of hand gestures can evoke certain emotions, qualities, or states of mind. For example, the Gyan mudra, which involves touching the tip of the thumb to the tip of the index finger, is thought to enhance wisdom and knowledge.

In many spiritual traditions, mudras are used as a means of connecting with higher states of consciousness or divine energies. By incorporating mudras into yoga practice, practitioners may deepen their spiritual awareness and sense of connection to something greater than themselves.

JNANA MUDRA

Jnana means wisdom or knowledge. Jnana mudra is the gesture of intuitive knowledge.

Practice Steps:

- Sit in a comfortable meditation posture with the back straight.
- Join the tip of the thumbs and the index fingers.
- Other fingers of each hand should remain slightly separated and relaxed.
- Place the hands on the knees with the palms upwards. Relax the hands and arms.



Fig 7.1

Benefits: Jnana Mudra is very effective in cases of mental ailments. It imparts happiness, develops intellect, and sharpens memory.

ANJALI MUDRA

Anjali Mudra, also known as Namaste Mudra or Prayer Position, is a symbolic hand gesture commonly used in yoga, meditation, and spiritual practices. The word "Anjali" translates to "salutation" or

"offering" in Sanskrit, and this mudra is a gesture of reverence, respect, and gratitude.

Practice Steps:

- You can perform Anjali Mudra while standing, sitting, or even lying down.
- Maintain an upright and dignified posture with your spine tall and your shoulders relaxed. Allow your chest to be open and your heart to be lifted.
- Bring your hands together in front of your chest, with your palms touching and your fingers pointing upward. Press the palms firmly together, ensuring that all the fingers are aligned.
- Keep the base of your thumbs lightly pressed against your sternum or the center of your chest, in line with your heart chakra.
- Your fingers can be gently spread apart or kept close together, depending on your comfort.
- Close your eyes gently and take a moment to center yourself.

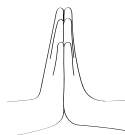


Fig 7.2

Benefits: Fosters a sense of respect, and

gratitude for oneself, others, and the divine. Brings awareness to the heart center and helps to align the heart and mind in harmony. Encourages a sense of inner peace, stillness, and centeredness by drawing attention inward.

PRANA MUDRA

Prana Mudra is a symbolic hand gesture in yoga that is believed to increase the vital life force energy (prana) in the body. It is a simple mudra that can be practiced to promote vitality, enhance energy levels, and boost overall well-being. The word "Prana" translates to "life force" or "vital energy" in Sanskrit, and this mudra is said to activate and balance the flow of prana throughout the body.

Practice Steps:



Fig7.3

- Join the tip of the thumb with the tip of the little and ring finger.
- Keep the other two fingers straight.
- Allow your hands to rest comfortably on your thighs or knees, with your palms facing upward.
- Close your eyes gently to help deepen your focus and relaxation.

Benefits: Helps in pumping the life force into your body. Beneficial for all types of diseases. Improves eyesight.

CHINMAYA MUDRA

Chinmaya Mudra is a symbolic hand gesture used in yoga and meditation practices to promote inner reflection, introspection, and connection with higher consciousness. The word "Chinmay" is derived from Sanskrit, where "Chin" means "consciousness" or "awareness," and "May" means "filled with" or "made of." Therefore, Chinmay Mudra can be interpreted as the "gesture of consciousness" or "gesture of awareness."

Practice Steps:



Fig7.4

- To practice chinmaya mudra, assume padmasana, vajrasana or sukhasana.
- Bring the tips of the thumb and forefinger together and form a circle.
- Curl the remaining fingers into your palms. Place your palms on the upper thighs. The palms can face upward or downward.
- Close your eyes gently and take a few deep breaths to center yourself and establish a steady rhythm of

breathing

- Allow your breath to be natural and effortless as you hold the mudra.

Benefits: Promotes the flow of prana. Positively impacts the energy in the thoracic region. Promotes breathing in the midsection of the lungs. Improves digestion.

DHYANA MUDRA

Dhyana Mudra is formed by placing both hands in the lap palms facing upward, with the right hand resting on top of the left hand. The thumbs gently touch, forming a subtle triangle shape. This mudra is often used in seated meditation postures such as Padmasana (Lotus Pose) or Sukhasana (Easy Pose), but it can also be practiced while sitting in a chair as per your comfort.



Fig75

Practice Steps:

- Dhyana Mudra is formed by placing both hands in the lap palms facing upward, with the right hand resting on top of the left hand.
- The thumbs gently touch, forming a subtle triangle shape.
- This mudra is often used in seated meditation postures such as Padmasana (Lotus Pose) or Sukhasana (Easy Pose), but it can also be practiced while sitting in a chair as per your comfort.

Benefits: Facilitates deep concentration and focus by creating a sense of inner alignment and stillness. Deepens the practice of meditation by grounding the energy and promoting a sense of centeredness and presence.



Chapter 8

Bandhas

Bandhas, often referred to as energy locks, are key practices in yoga that involve the contraction of certain muscles to control and direct the flow of energy within the body.

By mastering bandhas, practitioners can enhance their yoga practice, improve concentration, and experience deeper meditation states.

This chapter explores the fundamental bandhas and their integration into yoga practice for heightened spiritual and physical benefits.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the 15th century yogic text, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, talks about Bandhas? Written in the 1 by Swami Swatmarama, this scripture dives deep into Mula Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha, and Jalandhara Bandha. These practices are not mere physical acts but keys to unlocking and directing life's vital force, prana, facilitating profound transformations. They're recommended for awakening Kundalini, enhancing digestion, and purifying the body.

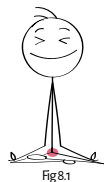
MULA BANDHA (ROOT LOCK)

Mula bandha involves engaging the muscles of the pelvic floor, specifically the area around the perineum. Its primary purpose is to activate and strengthen the muscles in this region, which supports the health of the pelvic organs and stabilizes the spine.

Mula bandha is believed to help conserve and redirect energy upward through the body's energy channels (nadis), particularly the central channel (sushumna). By drawing energy upward, mula bandha can enhance focus, concentration, and spiritual awareness. It also plays a role in balancing the flow of energy between the lower and upper regions of the body.

Practice Steps:

- Sit comfortably in any meditative posture, keeping the head and the spinal cord straight.



- Close your eyes and continue in Jnana mudra or any other mudra. Continue with normal breathing for some time.
- Then focus on the anal region. Firmly contract the anal muscles upwards as you inhale.
- Hold in this posture for a few moments with breath retention.
- Exhaling, relax the muscles & return to the starting position. Repeat the procedure.

Benefits: Regular practice of this Moola Bandha strengthens the pelvic floor, reproductive, urinary as well as excretory systems. Relieves hemorrhoids, constipation, and congestion in the pelvic area. Calms and relaxes the mind; and one gets physical, mental, and spiritual satisfaction.

Contraindications: Practice under expert supervision in case of any severe anal disorder.

UDDIYANA BANDHA (ABDOMINAL BREATHING)

Uddiyana bandha involves pulling the abdomen in and up towards the rib cage, creating a hollowing sensation in the

belly. Its primary purpose is to strengthen the abdominal muscles, improve digestion, and massage the internal organs. Uddiyana bandha helps to generate heat (agni) in the abdominal region, which aids in the purification of the body and stimulates the digestive fire. Energetically, it assists in directing prana upward, activating the solar plexus chakra (manipura), and promoting a sense of inner power and confidence.

Practice Steps:

- Sit comfortably in any meditative posture like Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Siddhasana, and keep your back straight.
- Place both palms on your knees.
- Close the eyes and leave the whole body loose. Start inhaling slowly and deeply through the nostril and then exhale.
- Try to vacuum the lungs completely. In Uddiyana Bandha, the practitioner keeps the arms straight and lifts the shoulder up while holding the breath out for a while.
- The abdominal muscles are lifted up and down, around the naval zone

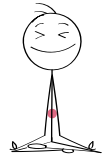


Fig8.2

with proper contraction.

- Stay comfortably in this posture for a while. Then leave the abdominal muscles loose and start bending from the elbows.
- By normalizing the shoulders, start inhaling slowly to get back to the previous position.
- After normalizing the breathing process, repeat it once more.

Benefits:

- It stimulates intestinal activity and the digestive process; helps in relieving constipation.
- Improves lung functioning. Stimulates the pancreas and proves helpful in diabetes. Balances the mind, reduces stress, anger, and frustration.

Contraindications: People suffering from stomach and intestinal ulcers, hernia, hypertension, heart disease, glaucoma, and headache should not practice this Bandha.

JALANDHARA BANDHA (CHIN LOCK)

Jalandhara bandha involves tucking the chin towards the chest, creating a gentle compression in the throat region. Its

primary purpose is to regulate the flow of energy in the region of the throat and to stimulate the thyroid gland.

Jalandhara bandha helps to redirect the flow of prana towards the upper energy centers, particularly the throat chakra (vishuddha). It can promote clear communication, creativity, and expression. Additionally, jalandhara bandha is often practiced in conjunction with pranayama (breath control) to help retain and circulate prana within the body.

Practice Steps:

- Sit in any comfortable meditative posture.
- Keep the spinal cord and head straight.
- Place both hands on the knees.
- Then start inhaling slowly and hold the breath inside for a while. Try to press the chin firmly against the chest or in between the collar bones, so that the windpipe and esophagus get firmly closed.
- Keep the hands straight and put pressure on the knees through the palms.

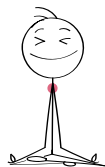


Fig8.3

- Hold the breath inside comfortably for the maximum duration.
- Then raise the head upward after relaxing the arms along with the shoulders and exhale slowly.
- Repeat the process continuously a few times.

Benefits: The practice of this technique is beneficial for throat diseases and the Thyroid gland. It helps in physical growth. It helps in balancing metabolism. It increases blood circulation in the head.

Contraindications: Persons suffering from a cervical problem, Spondylitis, hypertension or heart problems should avoid practicing Jalandhar Bandha.

Overall, the purpose of energy locks is to harness and direct the body's vital energy for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. By mastering these bandhas, practitioners can cultivate greater awareness of the subtle energy body and deepen their yoga practice.



Chapter 9

Pratyahara, Dharana & Dhyana

PRATYAHARA (WITHDRAWAL OF THE SENSES)

Pratyahara serves as the pivotal bridge between the yoga of action and the yoga of meditation. It involves redirecting our sensory experience from the external world to the inner realm.

Trataka (Fixed Gazing):



A practice of staring at a single point such as a candle flame to withdraw the mind from external distractions and stimulate internal focus.

Find a quiet and comfortable place to sit. Make sure your posture is relaxed yet alert. You can sit on the floor or in a chair. Select a point to focus on. Traditionally, this can be a candle flame, a black dot on a wall, or any other object with a clear and distinct shape. Place the object at eye level, about 2-3 feet away from you, at eye level.

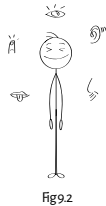
- Fix your gaze on the chosen point without blinking for as long as

possible. Try to keep your eyes relaxed and steady. If your eyes water or you blink, that's okay; just return your focus to the point.

- As you continue to gaze at the point, be mindful of your breath and any sensations or thoughts that arise. Notice them without judgment and gently bring your focus back to the focal point.
- Start with a comfortable duration, perhaps 5-10 minutes, and gradually increase it. Avoid straining your eyes or causing discomfort; if you feel any strain, take a break or close your eyes briefly.
- After a while, gently close the eyes and continue to gaze at the flame through the mind's eye. Fixing the flame at the eyebrow centre, continue this concentrated gazing for 3, 5 or 7 minutes. Repeat the entire sequence 2-3 times and close the practice by rubbing the palms together and cupping the eyes in the palm of your hands.

Five Senses Withdrawal:

- Dedicate time to sit quietly, sequentially withdrawing each of the five senses.
- Start by closing your eyes to withdraw sight, then focus on withdrawing hearing, smell, taste, and touch, progressively deepening your internal focus.



This methodical withdrawal helps to cultivate deep inner silence and prepares the mind for concentration and meditation.

Antar Mouna (Inner Silence):

Practice observing your thoughts without attachment, gradually attempting to reduce the number of thoughts until the mind achieves a state of inner silence.



It withdraws the senses from external stimuli and from the internal chatter, leading to a profound state of peace and readiness for Dharana and Dhyana.

- Choose a peaceful environment where you won't be disturbed. Sit in a comfortable position, either cross-legged on the floor or in a chair, with your spine straight.
- Take a moment to set an intention for your practice. This could be a desire to cultivate inner peace, self-awareness, or to quiet the mind.
- Gently close your eyes and bring your attention inward. Allow your awareness to turn away from external stimuli and towards the sensations and experiences arising within your body and mind.
- Begin by bringing your awareness to your breath. As you observe your breath, thoughts and distractions may arise in your mind. When this happens, simply acknowledge the thoughts without judgment and gently bring your attention back to your breath. Imagine yourself as a detached observer.
- Begin to expand your awareness to other sensations in your body. Notice any tension, discomfort, or areas of relaxation.
- As you continue to observe your internal landscape, you may notice emotions arising within you.

- Allow yourself to fully feel these emotions without resistance or attachment.
- Gradually allow the chatter of your mind to quieten. Allow yourself to sink into a state of inner stillness and silence, where you can simply be present with whatever arises.
- Remain in this state of inner silence for as long as feels comfortable for you, whether it's a few minutes or a longer period of time. If your mind wanders or becomes restless, gently guide your awareness back to your breath and the present moment.
- When you're ready to end your practice, take a moment to express gratitude and take a few deep breaths and gently open your eyes. Take a moment to notice how you feel after your practice and carry this sense of inner peace and presence with you as you go about your day.

DHARANA (CONCENTRATION)

According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Dharana is the sixth limb of Ashtanga Yoga and is defined as the practice of focused concentration. It involves fixing the mind onto a single object, idea, or point of focus, such as a mantra, the

breath, a deity, or any other chosen object of meditation. The purpose of Dharana is to cultivate a steady and unwavering attention, which is a precursor to deeper states of meditation (Dhyana) and ultimate absorption (Samadhi).

Patanjali explains that through Dharana, the mind begins to resist distractions and achieves a state of one-pointedness, creating the foundation for the yogi to experience inner clarity and calmness.

Mantra Repetition:

Mantra chanting is a powerful practice for spiritual growth, stress relief, or manifestation.



Fig9.4

- Select a mantra that resonates with you personally or aligns with your intentions. Mantras can be traditional Sanskrit chants, prayers from your spiritual tradition, or even affirmations in your native language.
- Sit comfortably in a cross-legged position on the floor or in a chair with your spine straight
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to relax your body and mind.
- Chanting aloud or silently.

- If you're new to chanting, you may find it helpful to chant aloud at first to get comfortable with the rhythm and pronunciation of the mantra. As you become more familiar with the practice, you can transition to chanting silently.
- As you chant the mantra, focus your attention on the sound and vibration of the words. Allow the sound to resonate throughout your body, mind, and spirit, creating a sense of harmony and alignment.
- Chant the mantra at a steady rhythm and pace. You can synchronize your chanting with your breath, repeating the mantra with each inhalation and exhalation, or simply chant continuously without pausing.
- Remain fully present with the experience. If your mind wanders, gently guide your attention back to the mantra.
- Incorporate mantra chanting into your daily routine as a regular practice and experiment with different mantras and techniques to discover what resonates best with you.

Concentration on the Breath:

Observe the breath as it flows in and out, using its rhythm to anchor the mind and exclude external thoughts



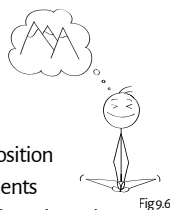
- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- Ensure your spine is straight, but not rigid, allowing for natural curvature.
- Close your eyes gently and take a few moments to relax your body. Release any tension you may be holding in your muscles
- Shift your focus to your breath. Notice the natural rhythm of your breath as it flows in and out of your body. Pay attention to the sensation of the breath as it enters and exits your nostrils or the rise and fall of your chest and abdomen.
- As you continue to breathe, simply observe the breath without trying to control it. Notice any sensations, such as the temperature or texture of the air, the movement of your body, or the quality of the breath.
- Choose a specific point of focus to anchor your attention on, such as the sensation of the breath at the tip of your nostrils or the rising and falling

of your abdomen. Use this point as an anchor to keep your mind from wandering.

- It's normal for the mind to wander, so don't judge yourself whenever your mind starts to wander or get distracted by thoughts.
- Practice breath awareness for a set duration, such as 5 to 20 minutes, depending on your preference and experience level. Start with shorter sessions if you're new to meditation and gradually increase the duration as you become more comfortable.
- When you're ready to end your practice, take a few deep breaths and slowly bring your awareness back to your surroundings. Notice how you feel after the practice and carry this sense of calm and centeredness with you as you go about your day.

Integrate into daily life: Try to incorporate breath awareness into your daily routine, taking moments throughout the day to pause and reconnect with your breath. This can help you stay grounded and centered amidst the busyness of life

Visualization:



- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position
- Take a few moments to relax your body and mind.
- Close your eyes and take several deep breaths, allowing any tension or stress to melt away with each exhale.
- Imagine a scene or scenario of your choice - nature, a deity etc. Make the visualization as vivid and detailed as possible, using all your senses to bring it to life.
- As you visualize the scene, engage all your senses to make it feel as real as possible. Notice the colors, shapes, and textures etc.
- As you visualize the scene, engage all your senses to make it feel as real as possible. Notice the colors, shapes, and textures etc.
- Tune into the emotions that arise as you visualize the scene. Notice how you feel in this imagined reality.
- Maintain your focus on the visualization, staying present with the imagery as it unfolds in your mind. If your thoughts wander or you become distracted, gently

guide your attention back to the mental image you've created.

- Continue the visualization for a set duration, such as 5 to 20 minutes, depending on your preference and availability of time. Trust that the longer you engage in the practice, the deeper the effects may be.
- When you're ready to end the practice, take a few deep breaths and slowly bring your awareness back to your physical surroundings. Wiggle your fingers and toes, stretch your body gently, and open your eyes.
- Take a moment to reflect on your experience with the visualization. Notice any shifts or changes in your thoughts, feelings, or physical sensations. Acknowledge any insights that may have arisen during the practice.
- Incorporate visualization into your daily routine as a regular practice for relaxation, stress relief, and personal growth. Consistency is key to experiencing the full benefits of the technique.

DHYANA (MEDITATIVE ABSORPTION)

Dhyana is the profound deepening of concentration into a continuous flow of absorption, where the sense of individuality dissolves into the object of meditation. Dhyana is considered a natural progression from Dharana, which involves initially fixing the mind on a single point or object. Through consistent practice, Dharana evolves into Dhyana as the practitioner's concentration deepens and becomes more effortless.

Mindfulness Meditation:

Maintain a passive observation of the thoughts, sensations, and emotions that flow through the mind without attachment or judgment.



Fig9.7

- Find a quiet space and sit comfortably
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to settle into the present moment.
- Bring attention to your breath and the sensation at the tip of your nostrils
- Simply observe thoughts, emotions,

- and bodily sensations that arise with curiosity and acceptance, without judgment.
- Whenever your mind wanders, gently guide your attention back to your breath

As you continue to practice mindfulness meditation, you'll begin to cultivate greater awareness of your thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations as they arise in the present moment.

This awareness can help you respond to life's challenges with greater clarity and equanimity.

Be kind and gentle with yourself throughout the meditation practice. If you find yourself becoming frustrated or judgmental, gently bring your attention back to the present moment with compassion and understanding.

Chakra Meditation:

The seven chakras are the most significant energy centers in the body. Maintaining a balance between the seven is essential for overall well-being. Here is a quick description of the chakras.

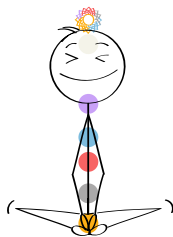


Fig9.8

- **Muladhara or the root chakra** - Located at the base of the spine, It is symbolized by a four-petaled lotus and represents stability and grounding. Its element is earth, and the energy here sustains physical and material existence. Meditating on this chakra is said to impact physical health, vitality, and grounding in worldly life.
- **Svadhishthana or the sacral chakra** - resides in the lower abdomen, near the genitals, symbolized by a six-petaled lotus. Its element is water and governs emotions, creativity, and sexuality. Meditating here influences emotional balance and creative expression.
- **Manipura or the solar plexus chakra** - Located at the navel, it is depicted as a ten-petaled lotus and with the element of fire. It is linked to willpower, transformation, and self-

confidence. It plays a role in increasing personal power and controlling metabolic processes. Meditating on Manipura impacts energy, personal strength, and self determination.

- **Anahata or the heart chakra -**

Positioned at the center of the chest, it has twelve petals and is represented by the air element. It symbolizes unconditional love, compassion, and the ability to heal. it is described as the source of divine sound (Anahata Nada) and the connection between the physical and spiritual realms. Meditation on this chakra promotes emotional healing and spiritual growth.

- **Vishuddhi or the throat chakra -**

located in the throat region, it is symbolized by a lotus with sixteen petals and governed by the element Akasha (ether or space). It governs expression, creativity, and the ability to speak one's truth. It is considered the gateway between the heart and the higher chakras, facilitating the expression of wisdom and compassion through speech. Meditating on this chakra is said to develop eloquence, inner clarity, and alignment with divine will.

- **Ajna or the third eye chakra -**

situated between the eyebrows, has two petals and is associated with intuition, insight, and wisdom. Also known as the guru chakra, it is the command center of the subtle body, connecting to higher consciousness. Meditation on Ajna develops intuition, clarity, and spiritual perception.

- **Sahasrara or the crown chakra -**

Located at the top of the head, Sahasrara is symbolized by a thousand-petaled lotus. It is beyond elements and associated with pure consciousness. It represents the ultimate union with the divine, achieving enlightenment and liberation (moksha). Meditating here brings spiritual awakening and a sense of oneness with the universe.

To practice chakra meditation, sit comfortably with your spine straight and close your eyes. Begin with deep, steady breaths to relax your body and mind. Visualize energy moving through your chakras, starting at the Muladhara and progressing upward to the Sahasrara. Focus on each chakra for a few minutes. Connect with the breath and practice for as long as one comfortably can.

Om Meditation:

Om meditation, also known as Om chanting or Om mantra meditation, is a form of meditation where you focus on the repetition of the sacred sound "Om" (pronounced as AUM).



Fig9.10

Practice Steps

- Sit in a comfortable position, either cross-legged on the floor or on a chair with your feet flat on the ground. Keep the spine straight but relaxed.
- Close your eyes gently and take a few deep breaths to relax your body and mind.
- Release any tension you may be holding
- Start chanting the Om mantra aloud or silently. The sound of "Om" consists of three syllables: A-U-M. Allow each syllable to resonate fully.

Here's how to chant Om:

- **A** (pronounced as "ah"): Feel the vibration in your abdomen as you chant the first syllable, A. Focus on the sensation and the sound.
- **U** (pronounced as "oo" or "oh"): Move the vibration upward to your chest and throat as you chant the second syllable, U. Again, focus on the sensation and the sound.
- **M** (pronounced as "mm"): Complete the chant by bringing the vibration to your head as you chant the final syllable, M. Feel the resonance in your head and focus on the sound.
- Keep your attention focused on the sound of Om as you chant. You can synchronize your chanting with your breath if it feels natural, but the emphasis should be on the sound and its vibration.

Continue chanting Om for a desired duration. Start with a few minutes and gradually increase the duration as you become more comfortable. Practice regularly to experience its calming and centering effects on your body and mind.



Chapter 10

Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra, known as yogic sleep, is a powerful meditation technique that induces a state of deep, but conscious relaxation. It's an effective practice for reducing stress, improving sleep quality, and enhancing overall well-being. This chapter introduces the foundational elements of Yoga Nidra, guiding practitioners through its stages for a transformative experience.

It is the state in which the conscious mind subsides, but awareness remains. It is a semiconscious state, or the state of awareness as you drift into sleep.

In Yoga Nidra, wakefulness is not lost, but only the external influences upon the ego dissolve. In sleep, there is total unawareness of the ego. Scientific researchers have described sleep in four distinct stages:

First stage: An altered state of consciousness and relaxation in the body, in which alpha brain waves become predominant. Alpha waves correspond to

relaxation and are produced in states of meditation.

Second stage: The dream state where the subconscious mind is active. This state is accompanied by the release of emotions, suppressed fears, and desires. Theta waves are produced by the brain during this state.

Third and Fourth stage: The deep sleep state in which the unconscious mind is active. This state is characterized by the awakening of instincts and primitive drive. In this state, the delta waves are produced.

Initially, the state of Yoga Nidra is dominated by alpha waves, but subsequently, a yogi can be aware during the experience of delta waves and deep sleep. Therefore, Nidra can be induced biologically, i.e. by a chemical reaction within the body that inhibits the brain's central mechanisms, reticular activating system, and cerebral cortex, or psychologically through mental control.

Steps to practice Yoga Nidra

1. Preparation: To begin the practice of Yoga Nidra, find a quiet and comfortable space where you can lie down flat on your back in Shavasana, such as on a yoga mat or a comfortable surface. Use any props like pillows or blankets to support your body and ensure you're warm and comfortable. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to relax your body and mind.

2. Setting Intentions: Before starting the formal practice, take a moment to set an intention or sankalpa for your Yoga Nidra session.

3. Body Scan/rotation of consciousness
:The Yoga Nidra practice typically begins with a systematic body scan. The facilitator or guide will verbally instruct you to bring your awareness to different parts of your body. As each body part is mentioned, simply bring your attention to it without any effort to change or control sensations.

4. Breath Awareness: After the body scan, attention is often directed towards the breath. You may be guided to observe the natural flow of your breath,

without trying to change its rhythm or pattern. Simply witness the breath as it moves in and out of your body, allowing it to deepen and relax you further.

5. Visualization and Imagery: In some Yoga Nidra practices, visualizations or guided imagery are incorporated to deepen relaxation and access the subconscious mind. You may be guided to imagine serene landscapes, healing light, or other symbolic imagery that promotes relaxation, healing, and self-discovery.

6. Deep Relaxation: Throughout the practice, you'll continue to deepen into a state of profound relaxation, letting go of physical tension, mental chatter, and emotional stress. The goal is to remain awake and aware while the body and mind enter a state of deep rest and rejuvenation.

7. Integration: Towards the end of the practice, you'll gradually transition back to a state of wakefulness. You may be guided to gently wiggle your fingers and toes, stretch your body, and slowly bring your awareness back to the present moment.

8. Reflection: After completing the practice, take a moment to reflect on your experience. Notice any shifts in your state of mind, emotions, or physical sensations. Acknowledge and honor any insights or feelings that arise during the practice.

Yoga Nidra can be practiced regularly as a standalone meditation or as a complementary practice to other forms of yoga, mindfulness, or self-care routines. It's a deeply restorative practice that offers numerous physical, mental, and emotional benefits, including stress reduction, improved sleep, enhanced creativity, and greater self-awareness.

61 Points Body Scan

- Lie in the corpse posture or Shavasana, with a pillow supporting your head (if necessary).
- Become aware of your breathing. Breathe deeply, smoothly, and evenly, without any pauses or noise.
- Starting with the top of your head, relax your head and face.
- Relax your neck and shoulders.
- Relax the upper arms, lower arms, palms, and fingers.
- Relax your finger joints, wrists, elbows, shoulder joints, and neck.
- Relax your chest, navel, lower abdomen, and hips.
- Relax your thighs, calves, feet, and toes.
- Relax your toe joints, ankles, knees, and hip joints.
- Relax the whole pelvis.
- Relax your navel, chest, shoulders, and neck.
- Relax the face and head.
- Breathe deeply, smoothly, and

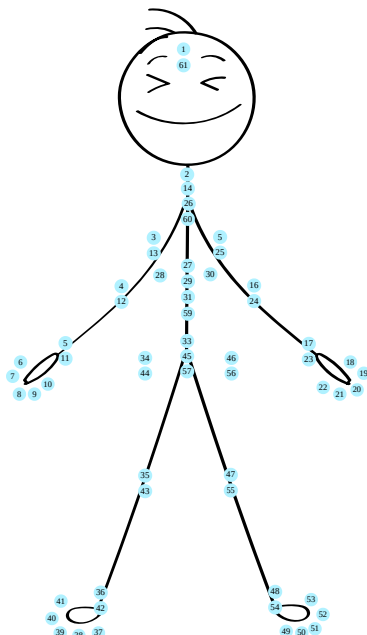


Fig 10.1

evenly without pauses or noise.

- In this exercise, you will pay attention, sequentially to 61 special points of the body.
- Bring your attention to the space between the eyebrows, the eyebrow center.

Keep your attention at this point and think of the number 1. We will now proceed through the remaining 60 special points of the body.

Bring your awareness to the center of your throat, 2.

Right shoulder joint, 3.

Right elbow joint, 4.

Right wrist joint, 5.

Tip of the right thumb, 6.

Tip of the right index finger, 7.

Tip of the right middle finger, 8.

Tip of the right ring finger, 9.

Tip of the right little finger, 10.

Now come back up to the right wrist joint, 11.

Right elbow joint, 12.

Right shoulder joint, 13.

Bring your awareness to the center of your throat, 14.

Now go across to the left shoulder joint, 15.

Left elbow joint, 16.

Left wrist joint, 17.

Tip of the left thumb, 18.

Tip of the left index finger, 19.

Tip of the left middle finger, 20.

Tip of the left ring finger, 21.

Tip of the little finger of the left hand, 22.

Back up to the left wrist joint, 23.

Left elbow joint, 24.

Left shoulder joint, 25.

Bring your awareness to the center of the throat, 26.

Now bring your awareness down to the center between the two breasts, 27.

Now across to the right nipple, 28.

Back to the center between the two breasts, 29.

Across to the left nipple, 30.

Again, back to the center between the two breasts, 31.

Now bring your awareness down to the navel center, 32.

Come down to the pelvic center, 33.

Go across with your awareness to the right hip joint, 34.

Down to the right knee joint, 35.

Right ankle joint, 36.

Now bring your awareness to the big toe of the right foot, 37.

Second toe, 38.

Middle toe, 39.

Fourth toe, 40.

Little toe of the right foot, 41.

Now come up to the right ankle joint, 42.

Right knee joint, 43.

Right hip joint, 44.

Back to the pelvic center, 45.

Now go across to the left hip joint, 46.

Left knee joint, 47.

Left ankle joint, 48.

Bring your awareness to the big toe of the left foot, 49.

Second toe, 50.

Middle toe, 51.

Fourth toe, 52.

Little toe of the left foot, 53.

Now, come up to the left ankle joint, 54.

Left knee joint, 55.

Left hip joint, 56.

Come back to the pelvic center, 57.

Up to the navel center, 58.

Up further to the heart center at the center of the chest, 59.

Bring your awareness to the throat center, 60.

Come up to the eyebrow center, 61.

Continue to breathe deeply, smoothly, evenly, and without a pause or noise for a few minutes. Feel as if you are breathing out and in through the eyebrow center.

This concludes the 61 Points Exercise.



Chapter 11

Practice Plans

Creating a structured yoga practice that fits into your daily schedule is essential for consistency and progress. This chapter provides tailored practice plans for varying duration's, ensuring practitioners can find a routine that suits their time constraints and yoga goals.

SAMPLE 15 MINUTE PRACTICE PLAN

A quick and gentle 15 -minute yoga sequence that covers a balanced mix of sukshma vyayama, pranayama, and relaxation to keep your joints lubricated and body feeling energetic throughout the day.

1. Centering (1 minute)

Begin in a comfortable seated position such as Sukhasana or Vajrasana. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, focusing on bringing your awareness to the present moment. Set an intention for your practice, such as cultivating peace, strength, or flexibility. One can also begin the practice with chanting Guru Mantra, Sahana Vavatu or

any other shanti mantras

2. Warm-up (4 minutes)

Start with gentle neck stretches:

- Griva Shakti Vikasaka (variation 2)
Gently turn your head towards your right side then switch to the left side. Repeat a 3-4 times.
- Arm Rotations (single and both arms 3 rounds each)
- Arch Bend (variation 5) 5 rounds
- Stand on your toes (7 rounds)

3. Sun Salutations (2 minutes)

Perform 1-2 rounds of Sun Salutations (Surya Namaskar), moving with your breath.

4. Savasana (3 minutes)

- Lie down on your back in Savasana, allowing your body to completely relax.
- Close your eyes and focus on your breath, letting go of any remaining tension. Stay in Savasana for 2-3 minutes, enjoying a deep sense of relaxation and renewal.

5. Closing (1 minute)

- Slowly awaken your body, wiggling fingers and toes.
- Roll onto your right side, taking a moment to rest.
- Press yourself up to a comfortable seated position.
- Bring your hands to your heart center and bow your head, acknowledging your practice and giving thanks.
- Take a final deep breath in and out before continuing with your day.

6. Pranayama (Optional)

- Brahmari Pranayama (3 minutes)

SAMPLE 25 MINUTE PRACTICE PLAN

25-minute yoga sequence that covers a balanced mix of asanas, pranayama, and relaxation techniques:

1. Centering (2 minutes)

- Begin in a comfortable seated position such as Sukhasana or Vajrasana.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, focusing on bringing your awareness to the present moment.
- Set an intention for your practice, such as cultivating peace, strength,

or flexibility.

- One can also begin the practice with chanting Guru Mantra, Sahana Vavatu or any other shanti mantras

2. Warm-up (3 minutes)

- Start with gentle neck stretches: Griva Shakti Vikasaka (variation 3 and 4) - Gently drop your right ear towards your right shoulder, then switch to the left side. Repeat a few times.
- Shoulder Rotation or Skanda Chakra - Roll your shoulders backward and forward, loosening any tension.
- Seated or standing cat-cow stretches: Inhale, arch your back and look up (cow), exhale, round your spine and tuck your chin (cat). Repeat for a few rounds.

3. Sun Salutations (5 minutes)

Perform 2-3 rounds of Sun Salutations (Surya Namaskar), moving with your breath.

4. Standing Poses (5 minutes)

Move through a sequence of standing poses:

- Tadasana
- Vrikshasana (tree pose)
- Triangle Pose (Trikonasana)

Hold each pose for 3-5 breaths on each side, flowing smoothly from one pose to the next.

5. Seated Poses (3 minutes)

- Dandasana
- Paschimottanasana
- Vakrasana
- Janu Sirsasana

6. Cool Down and Stretch (2 minutes)

- Ardha Shalabhasana
- Makarasana
- Setu Bandhasana
- Pawanmuktasana

Hold each pose for 3-5 breaths, focusing on steady breathing and engagement of muscles.

7. Final Relaxation (4 minutes)

- Lie down on your back in Savasana, allowing your body to completely relax.
- Close your eyes and focus on your breath, letting go of any remaining tension.
- Stay in Savasana for 4 minutes, enjoying a deep sense of relaxation.

8. Closing (1 minute): Slowly awaken your body, wiggling fingers and toes.

- Roll onto your right side, taking a moment to rest.
- Press yourself up to a comfortable seated position.
- Bring your hands to your heart center and bow your head, acknowledging your practice and giving thanks.
- Take a final deep breath in and out before continuing with your day.

9. Pranayama (5 mins)

Nadi Shoddhan Pranayama (15-20 rounds)

SAMPLE 60 MINUTE PRACTICE PLAN

1 hour yoga sequence that covers a balanced mix of asanas, pranayama, meditation and relaxation techniques:

1. Centering & Diaphragmatic Breathing (5 minutes)

- Begin in a comfortable seated position such as Sukhasana or Vajrasana.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, focusing on bringing your awareness to the present moment.
- Watch the incoming and outgoing flow of your breath and slowly observe the rise and fall of your abdomen

- Observe the expansion and contraction of the chest.
- Let the breath be as subtle and deep as possible.
- Set an intention for your practice, such as cultivating peace, strength, or flexibility.
- One can also begin the practice with chanting Guru Mantra, Sahana Vavatu or any other shanti mantras

2. Warm-up (10 minutes)

- Start with gentle neck stretches and neck rotations
- Bhujali Shakti Vikasaka (single and both arms 5 rounds each)
- Arch Bend (1 & 2 variation) 5 rounds each
- Jangha Shakti Vikasaka (dancers pose) 10 rounds
- Pada Mula Shakti Vikasaka (stand on your toes) 10 rounds

3. Sun Salutations (10 minutes)

Perform 6 to 7 rounds of Sun Salutations (Surya Namaskar), moving with your breath and chanting the mantras along with the asana.

4. Standing Poses (5 minutes)

- Padahasthasana
- Ardha Chakrasana

- Ardha Kati Chakrasana

Hold each pose for 7-8 breaths on each side, flowing smoothly from one pose to the next.

5. Seated Poses (3 minutes)

- Dandasana
- Paschimottasana
- Ardha or purna Ushtrasana
- Vakrasana
- Janu Sirsasana

6. Prone & Supine (5 minutes)

- Bhujangasana
- Makarasana
- Setu Bandhasana
- Eka pada and dwipada Uttanapadasana
- Pawanmuktasana

Hold each pose for 7-8 breaths, focusing on steady breathing and engagement of muscles.

7. Final Relaxation (5 minutes)

Lie down on your back in Savasana, allowing your body to completely relax. Close your eyes and focus on your breath, letting go of any remaining tension. Stay in Savasana for 2-3 minutes, enjoying a deep sense of relaxation.

8. Closing (1 minute):

- Slowly awaken your body, wiggling fingers and toes. Roll onto your right side, taking a moment to rest. Press yourself up to a comfortable seated position.
- Bring your hands to your heart center and bow your head, acknowledging your practice and giving thanks.
- Take a final deep breath in and out before continuing with your day.

9. Pranayama (10 mins)

- Sectional Breathing (3 mins)
- Sheetkari Pranayama (10 rounds)
- Anulom Vilom (10-15 rounds)
- Brahmari Pranayama (5 rounds)

TIPS FOR PRACTICE

- Consistency is key: Aim for regular practice to see progress.
- Duration can be built over time: Start with shorter sessions and gradually increase.
- Choose a time and adjust practices to align with your energy levels and the season.
- Listen to the body, no holding breath: Stay mindful of your limits and breathe freely.
- End with gratitude: Reflect on your practice and acknowledge your efforts.
- Seek guidance when needed: Consult experienced teachers to refine your practice.
- Focus on the journey, not the destination.



Chapter 12

Sage Patanjali and The Yoga Sutras

Sage Patanjali, an eminent figure in ancient Indian philosophy, is celebrated for compiling the Yoga Sutras, a cornerstone in the realm of yoga and spiritual practice. The Yoga Sutras, comprising 196 aphorisms, offer a meticulous guide to Raja Yoga, or Ashtanga Yoga, delineating the journey towards self-realization and liberation.

Unveiling the Four Padas

Samadhi Pada: This section enlightens us on the ultimate rewards of yoga practice - a state of profound meditation and consciousness.

Sadhana Pada: It lays down the yoga discipline itself, outlining steps and ethical principles crucial for spiritual growth.

Vibhuti Pada: Here, Patanjali navigates through the extraordinary outcomes of diligent practice, including heightened perceptions and abilities beyond the ordinary.

Kaivalya Pada: The final chapter leads us towards liberation, offering insight into the soul's emancipation from the cycle of birth and rebirth.

The Eight Limbs of Yoga: A Holistic Approach

Patanjali's Raja Yoga unfolds through the Eight Limbs, a systematic approach integrating ethical, physical, and spiritual practices:

1. **Yama:** Ethical standards, including non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and non-covetousness.
2. **Niyama:** Self-discipline and spiritual observances, such as purity, contentment, self-discipline, self-study, and surrender to a higher power.
3. **Asana:** Physical postures designed to purify the body and provide the physical strength and stamina required for long periods of meditation.
- 4.



4. **Pranayama:** Breath control exercises enhancing the flow of prana, vital life energy.
5. **Pratyahara:** Withdrawal of the senses from external objects to internalize the mind.
6. **Dharana:** Concentration, focusing the mind on a single point or idea.
7. **Dhyana:** Meditation, the uninterrupted flow of concentration.
8. **Samadhi:** A state of superconsciousness, union with the divine.

To truly grasp the essence of the Yoga Sutras, practitioners are encouraged to engage with the text deeply, integrating its teachings into daily life. For a modern interpretation that resonates with both theists and atheists alike, exploring Sri M's "Yoga Also for the Godless" offers insightful perspectives on achieving spiritual growth without the necessity of religious dogma.



EPILOGUE

As we conclude this guide, let's reflect on our journey with yoga. This guide is a starting point, leading you to self-discovery, peace, and spiritual growth. Yoga teaches us to rise above the ordinary, to connect with our true selves, and to recognize our place in the universe.

Sri M's teachings guide us towards not just better health and mental clarity, but towards realizing our true essence. Every mantra, asana, and breath brings us closer to understanding life's profound rhythm.

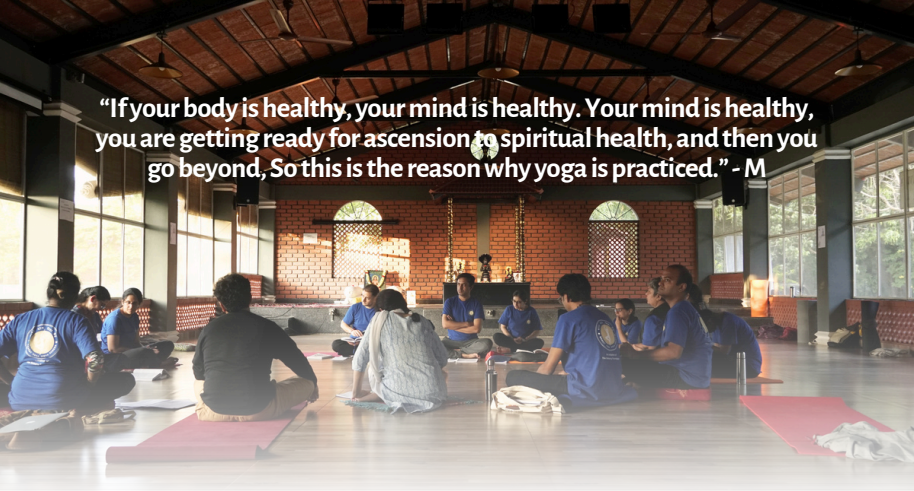
Remember, reading this booklet doesn't mark the end of your exploration but rather the beginning of a deeper journey. Let the knowledge and practices you've encountered here accompany you as you walk the path of yoga, deepening your divine connection.

With heartfelt gratitude, we encourage you to integrate yoga's light into your daily life, shining a path for yourself and others around you.

"In yoga, we do not merely look at the body as a physical entity but as a manifestation of the vibratory energies of life. When in harmony, we experience health, happiness, and a profound sense of interconnectedness with the universe."

This journey is yours to continue, with each step unfolding the infinite possibilities. We wish you all the best and extend our gratitude for sharing this journey with us.





"If your body is healthy, your mind is healthy. Your mind is healthy, you are getting ready for ascension to spiritual health, and then you go beyond. So this is the reason why yoga is practiced." - M

BHARAT YOGAVIDYA KENDRA

Bharat Yogavidya Kendra (BYK), founded by Sri M, is dedicated to the practice and teaching of traditional Yogavidya, rooted in the Nath Yoga lineage. We are here to share yoga's ancient wisdom, focusing on the well-being of body, mind and beyond.

- 1. Body** – Laying the Foundations: Rooted in scriptural wisdom we focus on achieving physical equilibrium as a way to prepare the ground for the exploration of the mind.
- 2. Mind** – Preparing the Mind: We intertwine ancient scriptures with modern scientific evidence, offering a balanced path toward mental wellbeing.
- 3. Beyond** – Going Within: Our teachings extend beyond theory, offering guided practices, retreats, and engagements that draw one closer to their true self and the universe's truths.

BYK has become a platform for yoga enthusiasts and seekers of spiritual growth to practice and learn yoga. With a far-reaching alumni network, the Kendra has created a community of like-minded individuals who are passionate about yoga's potential to improve the health of our body, mind, and soul.



Nestled among rolling hills in Madanapalle, **The Satsang Foundation campus** is sanctuary for life of all kinds. The Ashram, away from the town's hustle, is a haven for contemplation, self-study, and connecting with nature. Central to the campus is the **BYK Yogashala**, housing a consecrated **Patanjali temple**, symbolizing our dedication to yoga's ancient wisdom.

Amidst Babaji's temple, the Shivalaya, and the Peepal Tree, we gather to learn and share the path of Yoga. The Ashram offers a space to slow down and rest, while practice the art of yoga through learning, service, and holistic living.



Learn More and connect

